

# MAKERS OF NEW FRANCE

CHARLES DAWBARN





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Makers of new France.



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## **MAKERS OF NEW FRANCE**







M. POINCARÉ.

# MAKERS OF NEW FRANCE

BY

CHARLES DAWBARN

AUTHOR OF  
"FRANCE AND THE FRENCH"

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

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TO  
NORA  
A LOVER OF FRANCE



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## INTRODUCTION

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EVEN before the War there was something changed in France. The air was charged with energy. If it was accompanied by some loss of gaiety, it is not surprising, for, with the energy, had come gravity and a sense of responsibility. A few years ago the most ardent admirer would not have liked to hazard an opinion about France ; she seemed to be on the down-grade. Her population was dwindling ; all sorts of influences conspired to her downfall. Wrong-headed doctrinaires had seized the power. Government lost prestige abroad and authority at home. The Army was honey-combed with intrigue, the *fiche* flourished, ignoble remnant of the *Affaire* ; in the Navy, discipline was undermined. Laxity was everywhere, tradition held no longer ; neither patriotism nor the Church availed against a universal scepticism. And in this rank soil materialism reared its head. Nothing mattered except financial success.

It was the period of the Decadents. Literary men rejoiced in a gloomy analysis of the ills from which the country suffered. The talent of

Baudelaire, Flaubert, Zola, Guy de Maupassant was given to the school of depression. They probed wounds and rejoiced in morbid phenomena. If it was a period of high art, morals were low—as low as the spirits of the citizens. Art, like ivy, covered ruins. It was the period, also, of the *petit crevé*, that sad and cynical young man whose pose was pessimism, and whose aim in life, if he had one at all, was unmitigated self-indulgence.

Contrast this with the picture of France to-day : her strength and silence, her attachment to a high ideal. Every observer present in the country in the opening phases of the War admired the serenity of the national attitude. Mobilisation was carried out with masterly method, with a dignity and absence of hysteria refreshing to look upon. There was none of the symptoms of 1870 : recruits and reservists drunk with wine, or mad with nerves, crowds hoarsely shouting, with unconscious irony : “A Berlin !”

Here was evidently a new France, a France inwardly regenerated, for these signs of calm and courage were given before England had replied ; her help was by no means certain. Again three weeks had to pass before the khaki army could cross the Channel, and then how small it was compared with the masses mobilised by France ! Even months after the campaign opened it represented but one-twelfth of the force under Joffre.

We are right, therefore, in considering the movement inherent, not depending upon extraneous force. And the splendid silence of the people during the great retreat showed how firm of spirit was the country, how unmoved by the dread experience of war. At the end of November, Mr. Lovat Fraser wrote : “ I believe the most encouraging aspect of the present war is the success obtained by France : the new France, silent, resolute, and imperturbable.” Another writer asks us to contemplate this France, which has concentrated every energy on a single purpose, and to note how the gayest and most light-hearted land in the world, and the one with the greatest instinct for amusement, can lay aside everything and think only of the War.

Yes, France has put on the armour of strength and independence. She has awakened from her lethargy. The effects of the *débâcle* have been effaced. She stands erect again. From the dead wood of disaster have sprung new shoots of life. A natural reaction has followed from the unnatural depression. “ Jamais la France n'a été si belle ! ” exclaimed a Pretender, and an historian declared : “ Rich in ancestral virtues, France has acquired new ones. She herself was astonished at being so fine and strong ; her friends, likewise, were astonished, and, still more, her enemies.”

The bursting of the war-cloud meant surely a panic, said the pessimists. There would be a great run upon the banks ; the financial markets would be strewn with wrecks. Crash would follow crash in the business world. France would descend rapidly the scale ; pallid and fear-stricken, she would invite the disaster she so much dreaded. There was, it is true, a certain withdrawal from the banks ; but it was kept within bounds ; there were no “ scenes.”

There was a positive relief that the blow so long anticipated had fallen at length. People were glad to know the worst. For long they had lived under the shadow of Armageddon, and enterprise had sickened at the spectre. How could affairs flourish in an atmosphere of *alertes* ? The strain had been intolerable. Harsh and terrible though it was, the reality was almost better than the suspended horror. There is more invigoration in the tempest than in the stifling calm.

Paradoxical though it may seem, France was moved to fight because she loved peace and was at heart pacific. She wished to abolish war by making it unnecessary to fight again. With this feeling deep in their hearts, the tradesman and the peasant, the deputy and the concierge, the poor widow and the wealthy bourgeoisie, gave up their sons. Under no other banner but that of peace and civilisation would the nation have marched as

one man. Each recognised not only the sacredness of the cause, but its final and peremptory character.

The French response to Germany was like the awakening from a haunting dream. It effectually aroused the country, driving away in the hard, chill light of dawn, the troubled slumbers of an enervating night. It was like a charter of liberties, unrolled before the eyes of slaves. At last France could be herself again. Even manners had been affected by the German domination. The old French courtesy was disappearing under the flood of German beer which had swept away the taste for light and generous wine. A new confidence sprang up like a flower on a battlefield—fresh and wonderful though stained with blood. And danger proved the right tonic for its growth. Elderly Frenchmen were astonished at the phenomenon, though they exclaimed against the phrase : “The New France.” “There is no such thing,” they said. “France is perpetually renewed—that is all.” And there is, of course, La Belle France of tradition: a nation of artists and soldiers, a nation of brilliant men and witty women. How amazing she is, whether we study her under François I., or the Sun King, in the bloody epoch of the Revolution, or as being hurried to dazzling destinies by the First Napoleon !

An evidence of the new spirit was the resentment  
*b*

over Agadir. A tremor of indignation ran through the country when the *Panther* steamed into Moroccan waters on its errand of intimidation. Local bodies in France expressed their anger and, at the same time, their confidence in the Government. They were incensed that pacific intentions should be brutally exploited. "We do not want war, but we are not afraid of it," said M. Poincaré, later, to a deputation of Lorrainers who complimented him on his election to the Presidency. It expressed the new humour; but there was no rattling of the sword in the scabbard.

Carpentier's victory over Wells was one of the facts that stirred British imagination. One blushed to say it: it was more powerful than reams of writing, than tons of argument. The Anglo-Saxon mind understands force, and is a little doubtful of intellectual subtlety. The Frenchman's fists did more than conquer an adversary; they conquered a people. Thenceforth France was amongst the first Powers; did she not know how to box? British prestige was lowered in the ring, and John Bull, Junior, was immensely impressed.

Carpentier's triumph was comparable with Blériot's flight across the Channel. That stupendous event effectually disturbed our complacency. This France whom we considered slightly effeminate was actually leading in the air, leaving us hope-

lessly behind. Incredible ! The most profound Francophobe, if such existed, acknowledged that at least one Frenchman had shown the courage of the pioneer. The “ Well, I never ! ” of a startled England when Blériot fluttered out of a blue sky on to the cliff at Dover was the sincerest homage to renascent France.

That was but the beginning of it. There was much more. There were some wonderful feats in flying : seas bridged, continents crossed, the desert defied. France could laugh at frontiers, for she could fly over the wide earth. And people, still under the influence of her prowess, remembered other things to her credit : the submarine, the bicycle, the motor-car, colour photography, radium, “ et quoi encore ? ” Strange ! then France was not dead ; then she was not decadent ? And when success in sports was added—some victories in football, the appearance of champions in golf and tennis, and even a championess—and the army was reorganised, outcome of a Three Years’ Service Act, then was completed our conversion to the formula : “ The New France.”

War has confirmed the impression of power and given us new opportunities to understand. France has revealed courage, doggedness, and method—just those qualities we denied her. And to her sharpened senses has come the consciousness of a Britain totally unknown to her : loyal, true,

better than her word, gay and chivalrous in battle, brotherly in sympathy and sustaining power. What miracle of vision has been granted to the comradeship in arms! We shall see no more caricatures of each other in books and plays by French and English pens. The grotesque figure of other days: the gesticulating "Froggy," the big-footed Englishman with protruding teeth have disappeared. "Froggy" has become a term of endearment—"a dear good fellow"; John Bull a synonym of the "chic type." "Perfide Albion" is as fabulous as the Phoenix.

France has forged a new temperament. There is something in von Moltke's contention that war purifies a nation. It has purified France of many of her blemishes, not the least of which is the tendency to place party before the public advantage. Other and lesser ills have grown up in the tepid atmosphere of peace and plenty, unvitalised by the spirit of enterprise. The War has proved to be the touchstone of the patriot. Before it began, in the early days of a vague sort of tension, the President set the example by resisting efforts to whittle away the new military law. The approval that his action aroused showed there was a real public opinion in France; he was the first occupant of the Elysée to find it out.

This new temperament is associated with a new hygiene. Manly sports, baths, and open windows

have endued the young with hardness and resistance ; British phlegm has been outdone in France. It is we who have seemed gay and frivolous with our games and open theatres, our jaunty letters to the Press, our Punch Annuals treating war as a huge joke. And yet control of nerves is more meritorious in the French, because they are more highly strung, and pay the penalty of superior susceptibility. The complex experience emotions and sensations unglimpsed by the practical and commonplace. The Englishman finds difficulty in the abstract ; the Latin's finer sensibility has given him a quicker comprehension. All suppleness and adaptability, he is a readier prey to temptations that glance harmlessly from a sterner mind.

How often the unfriendly foreigner has proclaimed the decadence of France. Do not figures prove it ? Is not the population at a standstill ? France, clearly, is most hopelessly doomed. In a few years she will cease to be. In the meantime, her miserable population is fast becoming functionaries and collecting each other's taxes. But the spies and statisticians have failed to perceive the growing soul of France. That defied analysis, test-tubes, and laboratory experiments. It is too elusive for such processes. A real spiritual change has come about, and these careful calculators never found it out. Their dull brains missed the significance of certain happenings, banal to the

unenlightened eye. “A primrose by a river’s brim . . .”

French philosophy has helped in that subtle change, for it is an obvious revolt against the materialistic school; that is why Bergson is included in this book as one of the “Makers.” You must be more acquainted with these figures of contemporary France, in the name of that *entente*, which began by being a *mariage de raison*, and has ended by being a *mariage d’amour*. Admit that it is high time we knew each other better! After having fought for so long against France, we have now shed our blood with hers in a common cause.

The list of great Frenchmen does not pretend to be exhaustive. I have tried merely to give those whose action has been formative, or whose rôle is representative. You will wonder why one is admitted and another refused, but the gallery is obviously limited by the covers of a book. Here is but the head of the procession moving towards the sun. If from my window you can recognise the grey smile of M. Poincaré, the melancholy mien of M. Briand, note the energy of M. Delcassé, the apostolic fervour of Brieux, the rugged strength of Joffre; if you get a bright nod from M. Finot and a flourish from his white glove, a stream of silvery eloquence from Mlle Miropolsky; and if you perceive the savant in the bulging overcoat and

goloshes of Professor Metchnikoff, the mordant wit and irony in the alert features of Anatole France —then, I think, you will feel a little more at home with the celebrities of France. And that is all my ambition.

Each has done his duty in the War: the President in resisting party influences, M. Delcassé in controlling Foreign Affairs, M. Briand as Minister of Justice, M. Barthou in sending to the front his son (dead on the field of battle), after securing the passage of Three Years; but the list could be indefinitely prolonged. . . . Enough has been said, perhaps, to show the spirit of the race.



## MAKERS OF NEW FRANCE

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### RAYMOND POINCARÉ

THE present President is the embodiment of New France, the France which says "yea" or "nay" boldly, with no tremor of the eyelids, no quaking of the limbs, nor yet with any rattling of the sabre. As a small boy, Raymond Poincaré saw the Prussians arrive in his native town of Bar-le-Duc. His young brain was stamped with images of the invasion. As he sat on a stone bench by the river, overlooking a wide prospect of hill and vale, covered with the sombre pine characteristic of eastern France, he was filled with a resolve to serve his country, to efface the impressions of those scenes by creating others, warm and generous, in which France should find her prestige again. And, forty years later, the lad who had ruminated upon the national humiliation was President of the Republic. To say that he is a Lorrainer explains his character. It is serious and severe, prudent and patriotic. To a deputation of Lorrainers who visited him after his election at Versailles, he said :

"We do not wish for war, but we are not afraid of it"—words of strength and courage from a man to men who had seen war and understood what it meant. But if there is a stiff and firm resistance in the character of the Lorrainer, there is no defiance, no braggadocio. The Lorrainer is essentially prudent. At school young Poincaré was noted for carrying an umbrella. "It will not rain to-day," his companions used to say to him chaffingly. "But it might," replied the boy, glancing up at a passing cloud.

One would not like M. Poincaré if that umbrella really represented him. It would suggest exaggerated prudence and a disinclination to take risks—the antithesis of courage and spontaneity. It would suggest the insufferable little hero of some Sunday-school book, too good to live. That umbrella would have gone, with other stories, to express an overwhelming perfection. The boy would have been painfully virtuous, like the great men in gilded biographies, who make us long for a few redeeming faults. Happily, M. Poincaré is thoroughly human. He was a natural boy who fought with other boys when there was ground for it, and bore himself bravely in the battle. The result was that he was vastly respected both for his pluck and his sportsmanship, which held out the hand of reconciliation after the fight. And I like to imagine that, one day, that umbrella was

broken over the back of some big bully, whose jokes had become intolerable. Even in later life, in the sedate circumstances of the Elysée, M. Poincaré has retained a lively temper, and more than one Minister has had proof of it.

But if it is a combative temper in a just cause, it is not an aggressive one. It does not seek personal glory or the *panache*, but is constantly checked by the sense of duty. To suppose that he aims higher than the Constitution and would make himself Dictator is not to know his true character. One must not give undue importance to the umbrella, but it is there—in his armorial bearings. Though he may use it as a *bâton*, he has no intention of turning it into a sceptre. He is a Lorrainer, and Lorainers keep their heads. His good mother, I am sure, equipped him with that umbrella—symbol of maternal solicitude. Sheer common sense as well as hereditary prudence would prevent him from overplaying his rôle of Parliamentary President as laid down by the Constitution of 1875.

But if Poincaré fought sometimes and defended himself after the code of the playground, he was preparing for his future in another way. He loved to make speeches upon every subject, possible and impossible. Mounted upon a chair, under the grave and whispering elms, he would hold forth upon a fire, a flood, an earthquake, a death, a local

or national calamity. He was equally eloquent upon all these things. His fellow-*lycéens* cheered him and clapped him on the back, predicting a great future for him. His industry was tremendous, and yet he found time for games.

His mother instilled into him habits of early rising and systematic study. Her own hour for rising was 5 a.m. She devoted the short evenings to her sons Raymond and Lucien, helping them to prepare their lessons for the morrow. Upstairs in that quiet little house of Bar-le-Duc sat the father, a civil engineer in Government employ. He was a great classic, and imparted to his sons some of his own enthusiasm for Horace, Virgil, Homer, and Thucydides. Both lads profited by this parental exercise of scholarship and simple devotion. The mother had the happiness of seeing her elder son become President of the Republic and the younger head of secondary education in the Ministry of Public Instruction. An interesting portrait group, taken on the morrow of Versailles, shows the President surrounded by his family; from out of the picture look the kindly wrinkled features of Mme Poincaré *mère*. The son's first sorrow at the Elysée, after his installation there, was her death.

M. Poincaré left the scenes of his boyhood with reluctance and came to Paris to study for his bachelaureate. Somewhere I have read the letters that

he wrote at that time ; they are instinct with a youthful melancholy. He missed his old playmates, and he stifled in the atmosphere of Paris, after his healthy open-air life in eastern France. But youth finds speedy consolation, and, presently, he was forming new friendships in the Latin Quarter, where he began to study in the Law School. Delightful hours were spent with his cousin, Henri Poincaré, the mathematician, and Emile Boutroux, the philosopher, who has married into the family. The future President followed a career of equal brilliance at the Bar and in Parliament. Very early in his existence he became secretary to the yearly Congress of the Order—a position only given to young men of promise. Then he was retained in important cases, which won him fame. Judges listened to him with attention, for he was always impressive, with a precise and formal oratory which was never theatrical—a fault common at the French Bar. There is much more latitude given to counsel in France than in England, where direct appeals to the sentimentality of juries is discouraged by the Bench. It was in conducting one of his cases that he met his future wife—a charming Italian lady. Mutual sympathy was awakened. She was moved by his eloquence, just as he was moved by her charms and the justice of her case. And he won both the verdict and the lady, for, whilst he was pleading for the one, he was unconsciously

pleading for the other. It is one of his successes of which he may well be proud, for it has given him a devoted helpmeet, one whose graciousness and sympathy make her an admirable hostess at the Elysée. M. Poincaré owes a great deal to his wife. Her delicacy and tact often soften the asperities of his decisions ; she is the natural complement to his character, for long contact with realities has hardened him into steel.

In Parliament he obtained a reputation partly because of his refusal to pander to the party spirit. A large treatment of national questions is perhaps rarer at the Palais Bourbon than at Westminster, where tradition of the better sort still finds a kindly soil. He was a quite young man when he accepted the portfolio of Education, and he made a remarkable Minister. He was *ex officio* Chancellor of the University and titular chief of the Sorbonne at an age when he could have been a son of any of the professors. Later, as Minister of Finance, he became an expert in the management of the public purse. But to English people he became interesting when he formed a Cabinet immediately after M. Caillaux had got the nation into grave difficulties over Germany's claim for "compensation" as against Morocco. Poincaré cumulated the office of Premier with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He occupied the Quai d'Orsay at a particularly critical period. The Balkan War was beginning, and the

air was filled with its tremblings. The Premier's natural prudence and knowledge of affairs were devoted to keeping contact with the different Cabinets and thus preventing European intervention. It is largely owing to his tact and determination that peace was kept amongst the Great Powers and that war was confined to the original belligerents.

M. Poincaré's Parliamentary manner is impressive. It is typical of the man : a little cold, a little formal—a little English, according to the French view. "It is oil and vinegar," said the Parliamentarians, referring to his union with M. Briand, who was Vice-Président du Conseil. M. Briand, indeed, is oil and sweetness, whilst M. Poincaré has much more natural resistance and a sturdy contempt for compromise. In an ordinary sense, he is not a politician ; he does not play off party against party and win his way through Parliamentary majorities by bluff and subterfuge. He has not a talent for intrigue, but goes openly and, at the same time, prudently to work to accomplish his ends. His character was so distinct from the others that people regarded him as a super-politician, and prophesied his succession to M. Fallières.

For a long time he hesitated to accept nomination. When finally he yielded, he surprised a number of his friends, who declared that the Presidency was a species of interment ; a man had no scope for energy and independence. But M. Poincaré

thought differently. He thought that, within the four corners of the Constitution, there was a place for a proud, impartial, and yet dominating figure that should really lead the Republic. This he has succeeded in doing. I shall always remember his election at Versailles : the conflict of personalities, the excitement of the groups, the determination of the Radicals to let no chance slip for the return of their own candidate, who was M. Pams. An excellent man of great wealth and no particular talents, if he did not merit the distinction that was thrust upon him, he retired very gracefully on the morrow to his comfortable fig tree. But opposition to M. Poincaré came from a group of Radicals, who combated him on personal grounds. It is not Republican to be distinguished, and M. Poincaré had raised himself above the common level. It was felt to be distinctly dangerous, in a Republic like France, to give power to a man of parts. He would be tempted to use that power and to pose as a dictator ; he would overplay the rôle. That was the excuse for voting for M. Pams. But M. Poincaré easily outdistanced his rival, and received the congratulations of all groups in the Chamber. Thus ended his career as a combative statesman ; he had been translated to the high, impartial sphere of President of the Republic.

While yet Premier he had found the time to make some remarkable speeches in and out of

Parliament. English people will remember the admirable oration he made at the unveiling of the statue to Queen Victoria at Cimiez. In the short space of fifteen hundred words or so, he told the whole story of the Good Queen, from the day of her birth to that of her death, and no leading action was omitted from this brief and brilliant survey. His estimate of King Edward was equally exalted and equally acceptable to the British people. He has a great regard for the English Royal Family. In London and in Paris he has had close conversations with the King; as Premier and President he received the Prince of Wales, and preserves of each visit a charming souvenir. On the eve of his journey to London, M. Poincaré personally expressed to me his pleasure in renewing acquaintance with the Heir Apparent.

In person small—like most “great” Frenchmen—you have seen him in the streets of London?—he has something particularly attractive in his rugged face—the face of Socrates. The stern features relax, from time to time, into a charming smile. The eyes are most expressive: alert and brilliant with thought. His hands are especially graceful, and, in speaking, they make eloquent gestures—though for a Frenchman he is singularly free from these movements. If he appears to possess an iron temperament, his most intimate friends declare that he is a nervous man. When speaking

in the Chamber on important occasions, his voice was curiously elevated until it became a shout. It seemed as if he were trying to command his nerves. He is no impressionist painter, but gets his effects quietly from within. His method is to memorise his speech, after elaborate preparation, and then to read it in his brain at the moment of delivery. Like many a man working at high pressure, he distrusts the impromptu. His speeches are practically never spontaneous. In his present position this is imperative; but it has been his rule through life. His pains to secure perfection are apparent from the speeches themselves; they shimmer from a hundred facets. They are built up with the care of some great master-builder of the past. The language is pure, the thought precise. There is no brandishing of the big stick, no cheap appeal. His orations are made to last, and the best will serve as models to future generations of school-children.

The President has very few hobbies; in an ordinary sense, he has none at all. Though his position as Chief of State compels him to give solemn battues at Rambouillet to royal and official personages, he never holds a gun, but promenades in the covers with a stick in his hand. Destruction of life does not appeal to him as a sport; he considers, apparently, that his grandfather, Gillon, who was a great hunter (particularly of wolves, which

then abounded in eastern France), did enough slaying for the family.

He has been always fond of animals. As a lad he kept canaries, squirrels, a cat, and dog in his bedroom. He has a favourite Siamese cat named Gris-Gris, who enjoyed the particular affection of his mother, and two dogs named Bobette and Bravo. The latter has the proud privilege of guarding the President's private property at Le Clos, Sampigny. Mme Poincaré shares her husband's love of the lower creation, and at Sampigny is a sort of poultry palace where she keeps her feathered friends. Ducks and hens live there as pampered pensioners all the year round.

Sampigny is the President's retreat from the cares of office. Alas ! it suffered severely from the Germans, who took a malicious pleasure in bombarding the house. In normal times M. Poincaré liked to return to its tranquil joys, just as M. Fallières found solace at Loupillon amongst his vines. Sampigny is in a corner of Lorraine on a little branch line between Verdun and the frontier. "C'est là !" exclaimed travellers by the train, with their heads out of window, as they remarked the shimmering roof and walls of M. Poincaré's house, standing out on the hillside, from its background of dark green foliage. Sampigny is a village of 1700 inhabitants, the headquarters of a regiment of Chasseurs à Cheval. An old château gave uncom-

fortable lodging to the officers. A little railway station, a rustic church, and a few dozen houses comprised the village, nestling in its orchards at the foot of the hill.

“Le Clos,” in *ante-bellum* days, was a comfortable and roomy house of no particular style ; it did not suggest a château of the Renaissance, or even an eighteenth-century belvedere. The unpretentious grounds recall but faintly the sumptuous gardens of Rambouillet and Fontainebleau, which a grateful country has given to its President for resting-places. But M. Poincaré preferred the tranquillity of this spot, with its unrivalled panorama of the Meuse. Down below in the valley, too, winds the silver ribbon of a canal fringed with tall poplars. The sylvan solitude was broken, now and again, before the war, by the sound of bell or bugle—calling the faithful to Mass or the soldier to his quarters.

The President has traversed every path in the neighbouring pine-wood, book in hand ; it is his great diversion. He reads as he walks, and he reads everything : poetry, science, law, travel—even novels and magazines. He has the lawyer’s trained faculty of rejecting the unessential and fastening upon the fact required. A secret of his oratorical success is his allusiveness. Having read everything, he can touch upon everything, for he remembers everything. In early years his ambitions were literary ; he hoped to become a writer. But careful

parents pointed out the precariousness of letters and advised the law, and young Poincaré was sensible enough to follow the advice. This, however, did not prevent him from writing fiction in a local paper under a pseudonym ; but his real vocation lay in law and politics.

His excellent habits were derived, I have said, from his mother. One of them is early rising. For years he left his bed at five o'clock. Though he cannot continue this practice at the Elysée, by reason of his engagements, which keep him up at night, he still manages to transact his chief business at an early hour. This habit, both salutary and sound, gives the best results, for “there is gold in the mouth of the morning.” Then is the judgment clearer and the mind readier to grasp difficulties than later in the day.

M. Poincaré is a masterful man, and it was doubtful if his strong and independent character would adapt itself to the delicate requirements of the Presidency. It is a purely constitutional rôle, which, in any executive sense, is subordinated to the Ministers. But, as I have remarked, M. Poincaré has the caution and cool-headedness of his race. And yet it would be a mistake to suppose that the Constitution of 1875 deprives the office of all initiative or makes it merely colourless and impersonal. It is clear that the framers of the Constitution sought to give to the Presidency

the form of a constitutional monarchy ; but, notwithstanding restrictions of tradition rather than of the law itself, there are great possibilities in the position. The President is commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the Republic ; he can dissolve the Chamber with the consent of the Senate ; he appoints Ministers, and in his hands rest, in theory at all events, the higher posts of army and navy. If his signature to laws must be countersigned by a Minister, he has considerable power in many ways and need only exercise it.

M. Poincaré has given to the Elysée a *cachet* and prestige that it has not possessed for years. Always nervous of a *coup d'état*, the Republican majority sought, as far as possible, to cramp the individuality of the President and to reduce him to the level of a functionary. MM. Loubet and Fallières lent themselves to this policy of effacement,—for their peasant qualities were better suited to retirement than to parade,—but M. Poincaré is of another mould. He insists on taking a leading part in social and national movements, and presides, with real authority and distinction, over Cabinet meetings, which are the most important part of his functions. He has shown that it is possible to remain strictly constitutional and yet be a guiding spirit in the nation.

This was apparent after the elections of 1914. The Socialist Radicals exhibited hostility to three

years' service. "If you touch the law," the President is reported to have said, "I shall dissolve the Chamber." The threat was sufficient, and the Viviani Declaration showed a loyal acceptance of the law. The President had performed a great patriotic duty in resisting dangerous equivocation.

It is true that embarrassing praise has been given him by the Opposition press, and he may well murmur with Dr. Johnson, "Save me from my friends," for these sort of friends are particularly indiscreet. The *Gaulois*, in its best Faubourg manner, gives him stately praise, and the *Figaro* grows lyrical in his honour. The recipient of these panegyrics has the right to fear the Greeks when they bring presents. None the less, he owes partly his election to these influences. The Radicals were divided, many of them voting for M. Pams, as the colourless candidate of their ideal, and so M. Poincaré's majority had to be strengthened by elements more or less foreign to the Republican crucible; these constituents were marked: "Centre" and "Right." The Pope advised the Catholic Right to vote for M. Poincaré at Versailles, for I have it on good authority that a leading deputy of the Opposition received a letter in this sense from the Vatican on the eve of the poll. But it would be folly to suppose that M. Poincaré is likely to become the tool of anti-Republicans: in this he would belie his own record.

as well as his family tradition. His maternal grandfather, André Gillon, was a celebrated Republican in the days when Republicanism meant disfavour for the deputy or functionary in Paris. He, himself, by his civil marriage, has broken the canons of the Church.

What, then, do Catholics and Royalists expect? They expect some attempt to tamper with the régime, some notable *coup* which will hasten the end of the Republic or at least bring back the congregations. That it is a hopeless lost cause makes no difference to them. "One is never quite sure in France," they whisper in their conclaves, and then they say, "So-and-so can be bought"; "So-and-so is not quite steady in his allegiance to the Republic, and there is a group at the Chamber ready to come to heel at the sound of a Royalist whistle." However true this may be—and to the plain man it seems the merest chimera, after forty years of the Republic—it could not possibly get any encouragement from M. Poincaré, a sincere and earnest Republican.

But apart from this perpetual if harmless intrigue, it is satisfactory to know that France is tiring of Jacobinism and sectarianism. In the speeches that he made on tour in south-western France, the President was careful to appeal to Frenchmen to heal their differences and work for the good of the country. This is the right spirit, the spirit of to-

day. France is fatigued with faction rule, and this is one of the reasons for that comforting movement which we call "the New France," for want of a better name. In a journal a while ago, I found a two-column article explaining why the Government could not tolerate in Eastern waters the celebration of Good Friday in the navy. This is the old, old France. In an adjacent column, I read the exploit of an aviator who had crossed the seas in one long flight: this is the New France. Poincaré speaks emphatically to that New France; that is why, in any account of the movement, we must place him at the top.

His capacity for work is tremendous—like that of every successful professional man. He has no idea of taking his ease as others would be tempted to do after a particularly strenuous life, a life given to combat to attain the highest end. He is determined to devote the energies that remain to him and his splendid intellect to the embellishment of his post, to render it thoroughly worthy of a brilliant people, and, at the same time, to instil into every Frenchman a joyous pride of country. As an Academician, as an orator whose speeches have been polished on the models of antiquity, as a forensic lawyer with a mastery of detail and a command of complicated problems, as a statesman whose wise intervention has contributed sensibly to the diminution of the risk of

war, and as a President already marked by his courageous enterprise and by his wide and comprehensive view of the real interests of France, he is bound, I think, to go down to posterity as one of the greatest Chiefs of State. His comparative youth encourages us to believe that he will be elected for a second term, and fourteen years of power is no mean span even for an hereditary sovereign.

He is delightful in conversation. As I mentioned earlier, he was kind enough to receive me at the Elysée on the eve of his departure for London. He spoke with cordiality and evident sincerity of the pleasure he expected to obtain from personal contact with the British people, and alluded, in a happy phrase, to "the essential character" of the *entente*. Evidently the interests of Anglo-French amity will lose nothing in the hands of this able and admirable representative of France.





GENERAL JOFFRE.

## GENERAL JOFFRE

THERE is a great deal in names ; Balzac believed in their predestination. Certain men triumph in spite of their names ; others are helped by them. Kitchener has no reason to thank his cognomen, which is harsh and unmusical, for his success ; but Joffre is of those who have majesty in their names ; his is as solemn and impressive as Jove, as suggestive as Rodin or Réjane. Joffre well suits the man, for he is Olympian in his silence and gravity, Olympian also in his strange calm. He is of the race of supermen, yet he would be the last to attribute his success to genius. He does not believe in flashes of inspiration, but in method and hard work. He is the architect of his own fortunes, and owes nothing to political influence. To him the secret of success has not been revealed in a night ; it has come as the result of infinite pains. In a memorable speech a year before the war broke out, he said, " You can improvise nothing in war," and he is undoubtedly right, for war, especially modern war, is of the essence of preparation. It is hardly necessary to insist on the superiority of the German preparedness — that

was only too apparent in the opening phases of the campaign—but this was not Joffre's fault. He had been appointed only three years to his supreme office when the Germans crossed the frontier in August 1914. Since that day he did not forget for one single instant his vast responsibilities; but you cannot, even in three years of intense work, supply the place of forty years of implacable preparation.

Joffre's appointment, at the instance of General Pau, was the result of an outcry against divided authority. Up to that moment, the moment of Agadir, poignant in its menace to France, one man prepared for war and the other was destined to be the leader of the forces at the outbreak of hostilities. Obviously, this was a bad arrangement. The man who prepared for war should be the man who made it, and a Ministry fell as soon as Parliament realised the weakness of the scheme. Then Joffre came suddenly to the front. He had had always a great reputation amongst military men, but, to the general public, he was unknown. When Pau recommended him to the Superior Council of War, he interpreted the wish and confidence of all his colleagues, and so Joffre became Chief of the General Staff and Generalissimo in time of war.

For a period we heard little of him; he was content to work quietly in the seclusion of his

office. Then he set the world chattering with excitement ; the garrison towns knew no sleep for a week. Joffre had broken the careers of five generals, who had given proof of weakness in the southern manœuvres of 1913. "Here is a man at last," said the café strategist before beginning his game of manille ; "this is the chief we need in France." Others attacked him violently. A disingenuous mind discovered that the cashiered generals belonged to one particular school of politics, and that school, oddly enough, had always claimed Joffre. Then the further fact, more astounding than the first, became known : that Joffre was above politics ; it seemed incredible. Being a Republican and a Freemason, he had yet dared to discipline other Republicans and Freemasons ! It was stupendous.

Yes, Joffre had proved superior to personal and political considerations when he came to supreme office ; one heard no more of cliques and divisions in the army. There were no more secret *fiches* of officers who went to Mass and had their children baptized ; there were no more confidential reports to Freemasons' lodges of impulsive speeches by colonels suspected of reactionary tendencies. The influence of Joffre stopped all that, and stopped the intrigues that had been rife more or less in the army since the Dreyfus case. The Parliamentary soldier of the General André type was invited to

carry his politics to the corridors of the Chamber and leave the army free to pursue its work. That was the spirit dominating the great organisation after Joffre had taken hold of it, and he showed his utter indifference to mere politics by taking into his closest confidence Generals Pau and de Castelnau, both of whom are clerical, if not anti-Republican, in their sympathies. And Joffre advanced both men in the Legion of Honour for their services in the field.

The Generalissimo's letter of congratulation to Castelnau was suppressed in the newspapers by the Censor in the interests, apparently, of Republican simplicity and army anonymity. It has been always the policy of the Third Republic to talk as little as possible of its generals. I am not arguing whether the system is good or bad for the army ; but, even if it is bad, it is less bad than the exaggerated praise given to generals in 1870. Republican drawing-rooms resounded with imaginary exploits, which created a dangerous atmosphere of illusion. The Japanese have taught the world the value of silence. Silence suggests power, and in its beneficent shade an intricate organisation such as the army comes to its full fruition.

Joffre has an immense capacity for silence. He is as silent as William of Orange, without his gloom. His taciturnity suggests confidence in himself, which is the best method of imparting it to others.

Instinctively his staff looks to him for great decisions, instinctively it feels that each crisis will find him ready to meet it. He rejoices in responsibilities. Some one who watched him closely at work when the great task of repelling the invader from the soil of France was first begun declared that his calm was staggering. The greatest difficulties cannot upset it, and the greater the danger the clearer his faculties seem to become. He is as unaffected by the roar of cannon and the complexities of everchanging problems as if he were working out a war game in time of peace in the seclusion of his office at the Invalides.

A great deal of this mental poise is due to the care he takes of his physical state. He believes in the *mens sana in corpore sano*. For years he has deliberately prepared himself for the hardships of an exhausting campaign. He rises early ; at six o'clock he arouses his household. An hour later, he and his two young daughters are galloping in the alleys of the Bois. This morning exercise keeps him fit and counteracts the long hours passed in office work. He retires to bed early, save when he is absorbed in a book, and then a quiet and discreet hand—the hand of his beloved wife, who is an extraordinary help to him and even, they say, an authority on tactics—extinguishes the lamp at midnight that he may have, at least, six hours' sleep. He does not care for the theatre,

and prefers his books. His pleasure is in the society of his wife and daughters; the young people's gaiety fills the house. This man of war is a family man, living a retired life. On campaign he resists the temptation to overwork, and refuses to depart from his simple and wholesome habits. He still retires to bed at ten o'clock, to a lullaby of cannon. At dawn he is afoot again and has begun his day's work. Not even the Grand Condé, on the eve of Rocroy, sleeps more soundly than he ; this is one of the secrets of his success.

His resolution is remarkable ; having made up his mind upon a matter, he never alters it unless new facts justify it. He is steadfast to the point of stubbornness, and yet is ever open to suggestion from a likely source. His accessibility to collaborators and subordinates is one of his great charms. He realises that in modern war a set and fixed programme is almost an impossibility ; the scene changes too rapidly for that, and the plan must change with it in its details if not in its general lines. And thus, though the General is adamant in the execution of his plan, he will weigh all the elements and listen with an exquisite grace to the ideas of a serious man.

There are many seeming contradictions in his complex character. One of them is that, being a Southerner, he should be silent to the point of taciturnity ; for he is of the Midi, and a Gasccon,

a type noted for expansiveness and braggadocio. Joffre preserves a coldness and sagacity rarely associated with the South. Perhaps we are wrong to draw the line of temperaments between North and South as rigidly as we do, for Delcassé, also, is a meridional and as silent as Joffre le Taciturne. One day, at Petrograd, whither Joffre had come upon a military mission, the Czar of all the Russias turned to Delcassé, then the French Ambassador, and remarked, "The General must be from the North, he speaks so very little." "A Northerner like myself, your Majesty," remarked Delcassé smilingly, for the famous statesman was born in the department of Ariège, and Joffre at Revesaltes, in the neighbouring Eastern Pyrenees.

Though he has a temperament of steel, as becomes the silent man, the Generalissimo is extraordinarily humanitarian. This again seems a contradiction. He wishes to save lives. This characteristic distinguishes him from German commanders, who throw their men mercilessly against exposed positions, with no thought of the cost. Joffre will not throw away a man if he can avoid it—he has the true French sense of economy—and thus we have a long-drawn-out and painfully persistent scheme of fighting, resembling a chess match, in which the players move from square to square, sacrificing pawns, capturing this piece and that, until, by some clever

final move, the king is cornered and a checkmate declared. Joffre's way is not to hurl masses against strong entrenchments, but to wear out the enemy by a constant series of attacks, clinging to him, engaging him, holding him. When the proper moment comes he attacks with force and fierceness. One must not forget that he is a Frenchman, and therefore naturally given to the offensive. He realises that his countrymen are adapted by temperament to attack and pursuit rather than to fighting a dogged, sullen battle of resistance. But he has mastered his natural inclination for vigorous tactics in favour of those wearing processes whereby an enemy is slowly and relentlessly reduced.

His tactics at the battle of the Marne were of this order and are very interesting. The Franco-English armies had been in retreat from the Belgian frontier. They had marched away at great speed and continued to refuse battle up to a point perilously near Paris. Then when the enemy swept across the northern suburbs of the capital to the south-east, thanks mainly to the presence of large reserves in front of them, Joffre suddenly changed his attitude. He caught hold of Von Kluck's army corps, and pressed it so firmly that it was forced to retreat to save itself from envelopment. Joffre had bided his time, he had remarked the fatigue of the enemy, and this move-

ment from the north of Paris gave him just the opportunity he sought for making good the advantage he then possessed of fighting at home and of being supported by a new and fresh army based upon Paris itself.

When the full history of the battle of the Marne comes to be written, one will give a large amount of credit to Joffre's able lieutenant, General Manoury, who was in charge of the Paris army and moved it out at the psychological moment to turn the foe. His transportation scheme was the happiest in the war, for he employed eleven hundred taxi-cabs, which carried the army to the front, and in those taxi-cabs the soldiers ate and slept until the moment came to begin the battle. Picture the amazement of the Germans, who had believed that the French were completely demoralised and were lacking in resources, moral and material. Joffre's plan is always to have plenty of force in reserve; it is one of the signs of his superiority.

A comparison has been made—somewhat gratuitously, I think—between Joffre and Napoleon. If we are to suppose that the French commander-in-chief is of the school of the Great Corsican, we must admit that he has had precious few opportunities of showing it, for anything less Napoleonic than the struggles of the Great War it would be hard to conceive. The art of Napoleon was based

upon surprise. He found out the weak spot in his enemy and then flung his forces upon it. You cannot surprise your enemy when he has the aeroplane at his service, when he soars above your head and discovers your secrets : how you have disposed your troops, their number and composition, from which direction reinforcements are coming, and all the other secrets of a commander. Your cavalry screen is useless, for the enemy can see behind it. The cavalry man is almost as great an anachronism as the mediæval knight—you dismount him and give him infantry guns—but by a strange revenge armour has come in again to protect the occupants of trenches from the effects of fire. Better, if you are a corps commander, to have a thousand aeroplanes than ten times that number of horse.

Warfare has changed since Napoleon's day ; it has changed even since the beginning of the Great War. It is now a subterranean war, a war of casemates, invisible, with earthworks and disappearing guns, a game of moles and rats in holes. Napoleon's habit was to visit all the outposts on the eve of battle. He galloped from one end of the line to the other on his famous white charger. The imagination revels in the notion of Joffre cantering from Dunkirk to Verdun before breakfast ; instead, you must suppose him careering the country in low-built, high-powered cars. He uses

up two chauffeurs a day. At other times, in the silent atmosphere of his headquarters, his ear is glued to the telephone receiver, which gives him news from the battle front. Near him is his staff, bending over maps, studying mountains, water-courses, and the lie of the country. Joffre has no need to look at maps ; all the physical features of the country over which he is fighting are engraved upon his mind ; with the instinct of a born commander he knows where to put his finger upon the strategical points. If Joffre's tactics must necessarily be different from Napoleon's by reason of the aeroplane and the long-range gun, his manner of addressing his troops is as little that of the Emperor's. He does not call the Pyramids to witness the valour of his men ; but says directly, trenchantly, in the manner of the Roman generals, in the most austere period of the Republic : "The time for looking back has ceased ; you must concentrate all your efforts upon attack ; die rather than yield ground ; the slightest weakness will not be tolerated." This is the language which appeals to soldiers, and they repay his trust with an unlimited confidence. They call him "Notre Joffre" and "Grandpère Joffre," which is, perhaps, the highest tribute the *pioupiou* can pay. It speaks of filial faith and affection. "Il faut faire ça, c'est l'ordre du grandpère," declares Dumanet, when discussing the instructions of the higher command.

Joffre's policy in war is founded upon the Japanese rather than upon the Corsican. He throws out light column after light column, and the enemy must continue to extend his line for fear of being turned. This constant extension means, sometimes, a dangerous stretching of the cord ; it is the moment awaited by Joffre for a sharp offensive. He considers that the generals-in-chief no longer win battles ; that is more often the affair of colonels and even of simple captains. The assault is delivered on a battle front of two to three hundred miles : on such an extended line the will of a single man is scarcely operative. The rôle of a commander-in-chief is practically terminated when he has brought to the battle line all the armies that should form part of it. The rôle of colonels and captains commences when the first shot is fired. Really, the decision of the battle rests with the endurance of the troops. Those win who can stay the longer, who have the greater energy, who have the stronger faith in final success.

Joffre suggests the comfortable farmer type rather than the traditional soldier. There is nothing about his appearance or methods to excite the enthusiasm of the crowd. In civil or military dress he is not smart, but merely neat. His figure is solid and robust and not built on sculptural lines ; the neck is immensely strong ; the nose broad, with wide nostrils ; the mouth firm and

hidden by a white moustache ; the teeth somewhat prominent in speech. The chin is square, with sense of power ; the eyes, beneath the bushy eyebrows, are blue, limpid, and sincere, and singularly penetrating at times. They are twinkling eyes too, as if their owner saw, readily, the humorous side of things and found a quiet enjoyment in the ridiculous, though his laugh is rare. The whole attitude of the man betokens physical and mental power. In conversation he seizes readily upon a point, and asks questions with a directness that shows his grasp of mind.

His headquarters change constantly according to the requirements of the campaign. He is not particular where he works and sleeps ; he has a soldier's disregard for mere comfort ; luxury he never thinks of. You will find him in an inn, with two or three rooms joined to form his office and sleeping apartments, or he may make use of tents when accommodation in brick and stone is wanting. He never insists upon a château for his residence. His thoroughness and love of detail come largely from his training as an engineer. Such training is unrivalled in its mastery of minutiae. Had he risen from any other branch he could scarcely have had an equal knowledge of the scientific side of war. He knows the use of railways, and some of his finest *coups* have been performed with the aid of the iron road. His

achievements were the more striking because he was operating outside the circle while the foe was within. On one occasion he transported troops from the centre to the North—in Flanders—and substituted an English army for a French one under the very nose of the enemy, who was unaware of the manœuvre.

Joffre's early training was in science; at sixteen he had already obtained his baccalaureate in that Faculty; thereafter he entered the Polytechnique, the celebrated school of engineers under the Ministry of War. The first great struggle with Germany interrupted his studies and he was given a commission in a battery in the defence of Paris. He fought valiantly and well as a lad of eighteen—and he returned to college after the invaders had left the soil. Emerging with high honours, he was given fortification work to do, especially around Paris. MacMahon, then President of the Republic, passed by one day, and calling the young subaltern to him, said: "I compliment you, Captain." Joffre thus got his captaincy at twenty-four. There followed other fortification works at Pontarlier, at Duego-Suez in Madagascar, reputed to be models of their kind, until Joffre feared that his life would be passed in moving earth instead of leading troops. But Admiral Courbet in Formosa took the trowel from his hand and put a sword in it. Joffre won all the battles

that were given to him, and, later in the Soudan, he rallied the flying troops and led them victoriously to Timbuctoo the Mysterious. Thus was avenged the death of Bonnier, slain by the Tuaregs, and Joffre became known as a successful commander. There was other colonial experience, such as building a railway, and then the young officer came home to France, to command an army corps at Amiens, to head the engineering branch of the army, to teach fortifications at Fontainebleau, to join the War Board, and, finally, to become the real head of the army.

Those young men at Fontainebleau who listened to the slow, rather low voice of the thick-set, unromantic-looking professor never expected that one day he would lead the armies of the Republic, for his serious simplicity provided no thrills for the imagination. One result of the Great War will surely be to restore to the army its proper place in popular esteem, together with the Church, which has suffered from a species of reaction. But Joffre has no desire to become the popular hero ; he flees *réclame* and all its works. Sometimes young officers have taken up cudgels on his behalf, for he has gained enemies in his career, but Joffre is just as indifferent to their championship as to the criticism of detractors. None has gained his ear by flattery ; to merit alone is the path open for advancement. His education at the Polytech-

nique might have made a pedant of him, but he has all the qualities of the savant, with none of his defects. It is customary to laugh a little at the impracticable theories of the leading school; its graduates are said to design flying-machines, beautiful on paper, which have one single fault—they cannot fly. But Joffre is intensely practical. A deep knowledge of military history causes him to avoid the mistakes of other men, but it has not robbed him of his originality; and he knows also how to adapt the science of others to the problems of the hour. The circumstances of the war have given him a comradeship in arms with Marshal French. Before the war he had not seen the British army at work; now he knows its quality, and with his usual generosity has frequently acknowledged its efficiency and resourcefulness. Though living in the atmosphere of war, Joffre is a singularly restful man. The secret is his perpetual preparation. Read again those phrases which he addressed a year before the war broke out to a group of Polytechnicians: “Pour être prêt aujourd’hui, il faut avoir par avance orienté avec méthode, avec ténacité, toutes les ressources du pays, toute l’intelligence de ses enfants, toute l’énergie morale vers un but unique : la victoire. Il faut avoir tout organisé, tout prévu. Une fois les hostilités commencées, aucune improvisation ne sera valable. Ce qui manquera alors, manquera

définitivement. Et la moindre lacune peut causer un désastre."

His coldness and sagacity recall the classical figure of Hannibal's adversary, Fabius the Temporiser. Yet he is also the soldier of action, for, with his beaver-like qualities, his mastery of method, and business head, he combines the dash of the hussar. Thus he can speak to soldiers words of ardent patriotism, tense with the warlike spirit, instinct with those racial qualities of attack and of vigorous offensive which are the martial attributes of the French. You see a strong and energetic man knowing how to wait, recoiling that he may leap the better. All his life has been spent in ardent action: the Pescadores with Courbet, the Soudan and the railway from Kayes to the Niger, the march to Timbuctoo, to the help of the débris of the Bonnier column, the occupation of *la ville mystérieuse*, and then Madagascar, with those official appointments that led ultimately to the topmost rung—a position of unexampled responsibility, a battle line of two hundred miles, and in his hand the lives of thousands upon thousands of men. Joffre, moving the living pawns in this gigantic game of chess, is calmness personified. Methodically he submits to a severe moral and physical discipline. Those who know him best, as well as those who know him least, recognise his perfect poise. The sort of warfare

which is now imposed upon him, the cumbrous movement of vast bodies of troops, swinging upon a pivot like boxers in the preliminary phases of a fight, serves to bring out the qualities of the man, his immense patience, his persistence, his courage. No German could be more thorough and no patriot more whole-heartedly given to the work of freeing his country from the menace that has brooded heavily upon it for forty years. When Joffre succeeds in his mission he will have given a charter of emancipation to France, that once again she may cultivate the arts of peace and develop those innate qualities which have made her the most brilliant and civilised nation in the world.





M. DELCASSÉ.

## THEOPHILE DELCASSÉ

M. DELCASSÉ is one of the men whom France cannot do without. He is one of the essential guardians of national greatness. His strenuous little figure would be missed from the battlefield. He has the temperament of the fighter, and loves, for that reason, the atmosphere of the Palais Bourbon. His small energetic form expresses courage, just as the eyes behind the glasses reveal a singular penetration. His reappearance in Parliament after a year's absence, as Ambassador in Russia, was an important political fact in the Spring of 1914. It suggested new achievements in his already crowded career. Would he not be the new Premier after the Elections, and, perhaps later, the President of the Republic?

His obvious enjoyment of power has not prevented him from declining the Premiership on several occasions. I imagine that his refusal was dictated by a desire to avoid party labels, for, though he belongs to the Radical Left, he is not, properly speaking, a party man. He takes too large a view of national questions to limit his energies to one narrow section of the Republic.

His political life has been concerned entirely with big interests. He began in journalism, as a writer on foreign politics in the *République Française*, to-day of a reactionary character, but then imbued with Radical principles. He learned his *métier* of statesman in the early nineties, first as Under-Secretary of State, then as Minister for the Colonies. His great chance for distinction came as Minister for Foreign Affairs at the Quai d'Orsay. The office lasted for seven years, from 1898 to 1905, and formed a brilliant record of pacific achievement. Besides the accords, of which I shall speak, M. Delcassé staved off war between Russia and England over the Hull incident, by offering the good services of France, and mediated between Spain and the United States.

The moment of taking office was particularly difficult. Fashoda cast a shadow over the horizon ; it was the new Minister's duty to liquidate that affair with speed and dignity and then open a new chapter in Franco-British relations. He realised that the friendship and support of England were indispensable to France for the proper development and protection of her world-interests. This was the logic of the situation.

He saw that the basis of this new negotiation must be Morocco. It was the pivot of French expansion. For Morocco, France was willing to bargain Egypt and Newfoundland. Since her

refusal to co-operate with England against Arabi Pasha, her influence had sensibly waned in the land of the Pharaohs, whilst England had established herself firmly in the Nile Valley. Nothing remained to France but the shadow of the substance sacrificed in 1881 : a modest part in the financial and judicial administration. And the "French Shore" had ceased to possess its old importance since the introduction of other ways of drying nets. The continuance of the privilege merely exasperated the inhabitants, without representing any great advantage to French fishermen.

These facts did not prevent the bargain from being severely criticised in some quarters. The Minister had bought a pig in a poke, he was told. To get anything out of Morocco, you had to put a great deal in, and the interests of other nations stood in the way. Meanwhile, tangible interests had been sacrificed.

It was true enough ; but M. Delcassé was not the man to waste time in reflections of this sort, but set to work, resolutely, to obtain a free hand in Morocco, once the celebrated treaty of 1904 had been signed with England. Spain was the first to be approached ; she had obvious claims, for she had established settlements in Morocco and was the chosen *vis-à-vis* of Gibraltar. Having substituted herself for England, in the terms of the new instrument, France had to adopt British

obligations towards Spain, placate that rather proud neighbour, and enlist her goodwill and co-operation in the mutual development of the Shereefian empire. It was important, also, to indemnify Italy, who had never forgiven France for her occupation of Tunis. Playing an habitually open game, M. Delcassé declared that France would do nothing to thwart Italy's ambition in Tripoli ; and so it was all arranged—all substantial interests were neutralised—until Germany threw her bomb into the Cabinet.

“ What about Germany's interests in Morocco ? What is to be her compensation ? She is dissatisfied, and her interests are injured.” These and other suggestions were whispered into the ear of M. Rouvier, the Premier of the day, and the voice was that of Henckel von Donnersmark, an emissary of the Kaiser. M. Delcassé's courage rose with the occasion. He recalled the Chancellor's statement that Germany had no interests in Morocco ; but blue fear had descended upon M. Rouvier and his colleagues, and his argument was of no avail. The valiant little Minister had to go. Thereupon France went meekly to Algeciras, with the Premier as her representative, and discussed, with the Powers of the world, the charter of Morocco.

It was a bitter lesson to M. Delcassé. It brought home to him, for the second time, the

necessity of strength. Possibly he thought of that celebrated saying of M. Loubet's: "Only the strong are respected." Had they been strong at sea, the Fashoda incident might have terminated differently, and now the warning about German "interests" in Morocco had inspired the same reflection. Circumstances played into his hands and stimulated his zeal as reformer. There had been a dreadful explosion on the *Iéna*, causing a heavy loss of life. A Committee of Inquiry was appointed, with M. Delcassé as president. At the proper moment he indicted the Naval administration in a rapid and vehement speech, bristling with fact. It drove the Minister of the Marine, M. Thompson, to resign his portfolio. A year later, M. Clemenceau, who had separated himself from his Minister, fell with his Cabinet, and M. Delcassé was again the cause. It was a tremendous triumph for the strenuous Statesman, and made him one of the most formidable figures in Parliament. Imagine the kudos of it: he had routed the "Tiger" and broken the Cabinet-Breaker. It was a vindication, also, of his Moroccan policy, for M. Clemenceau had twitted him with leading the country to Algeciras, and the Chamber's resentment of this attack had precipitated the Government's defeat.

And so M. Delcassé came back to power again—not to the Quai d'Orsay, for national nerves were

not equal to that, but to the Ministry of the Marine in the Rue Royale. Before his appearance there, however, the work of reorganisation was begun by that excellent sailor and administrator, Admiral Boué de Lapeyrère. He had laid down a programme of two ships a year, which M. Delcassé helped to realise in Parliament. When he became Minister, he carried out the concentration of the naval forces in the Mediterranean. No longer was it necessary to keep the Northern Squadron in the Channel, for England, for her own reasons, had undertaken this duty of guarding both shores against the foe when she commenced her policy of drawing her ships about her in home waters. The three squadrons of the French command were given to Admiral de Lapeyrère, and no English commander has so large a force under his orders. The new arrangement has left France free to deal with the situation in the Middle Sea, which is complicated by the maritime activity of Italy and Austria. Thus, her naval strength is exactly where it ought to be.

M. Delcassé must be reminded of his struggles for an efficient navy when his eye rests upon the photograph of the Prince of Wales, which stands upon his table. It is a much-cherished souvenir of the Prince's cruise in the Mediterranean on the flagship of the Admirallissimo. Those pleasant boyish features must recall two facts in the career

of the statesman : the *Entente* and his work for the Navy. The Mediterranean interests of France have increased notably during the past few years, with the increase in the naval strength of the Triple Alliance, for Morocco with its long seaboard has been added to Algeria and Tunis, and linked with this further shore of the Mediterranean is the question of mobilisation. At the outbreak of war, the army corps now serving in Algeria must cross the seas to succour the motherland, and battleships must be there to convoy the troops. France's new rôle is, therefore, as much due to her own expansion as to the necessities of the external situation.

M. Delcassé is a tremendous worker. His early rising is proverbial. He leaves his bed usually at five o'clock, and only conceded an hour to the later habits and wintry cold of Petrograd. He balances this matutinal activity by an early retirement at night. He reaches his bed, generally, at nine o'clock, and maintained the Spartan rule even in the festive atmosphere of Russian official life, to the despair of hostesses. His monastic habits are pleasanter in the French countryside, which he inhabits for the greater part of the summer. He has a country house at Ax-les-Thermes in the Pyrenees, and here he stays with his wife and children during the Parliamentary recess. He is up at sunrise attending his roses ;

he seems to know each variety by name. In these charming pursuits he is accompanied by a favourite dog ; for, like the President of the Republic, he is much attached to animals.

In his life in Paris he devotes his earliest hours to current affairs ; he takes a little walk before breakfast, and then resumes his work until lunch —unless he goes for a ride in the Bois, which may occupy an hour or two. Of late he has abandoned this practice, and prefers to take his exercise afoot. He is a true child of the South in his liking for the sun. The afternoon is given to his Parliamentary work, and, wherever possible, he retires to bed soon after dinner. As a quite young man he was very fond of the theatre, but now he contents himself with half a dozen visits a year to the Opera and the Comédie Française.

In Petrograd his practice was to ramble along the Quays for his daily exercise, but with this intermission, and the time necessary for meals, he continued at his desk until five in the evening, when he broke off to visit the Russian Foreign Office. There is none more punctual than he in the discharge of his daily business, and such is his horror of delay that often, after a long sitting in the Chamber, he would return to the Ministry at midnight to sign his letters. He does not believe in delegating this duty to any one, and, in consequence, is always *au courant* with the business.

M. Delcassé did not succeed in learning Russian during his stay in the country, and languages are hardly his forte. He has a literary knowledge of two or three, and reads them fluently ; but he cannot be induced to speak them.

His own speeches in his mother tongue are classic in form and purity. He has a cult for the *mot juste*. In congenial company he proves a charming conversationalist ; but it is none the less true that, for a Southerner, he is remarkably silent, though his oratorical outbursts show that this is not due to any want of rhetorical resource. His taciturnity must be a little disconcerting at times to his familiars, when he is absorbed in a subject requiring severe concentration. By nature he is essentially serious, and is always in deadly earnest ; but his unbending will and his sterner qualities do not prevent him from showing a tender heart and a sympathetic interest in the concerns of his friends.

The comparative infrequency of his speeches makes them the more valuable. The Chamber knows when he rises to speak that he has something important to say. Master of his subject, he understands how to economise attention, to use the Spencerian expression. There is no redundancy and no high-sounding words to adorn the facts. A rigid logic links phrase to phrase, until the whole chain is complete and irresistible in its effect. He calculates his oratorical discharges as

if he were directing the fire of a battery of artillery. He attacks with such force that it leaves him victorious.

Personal courage seems to flourish in his family. It is inherited by his son, who pursues the heroic calling of an aviator. Whilst flying at Buc, he came into collision with a fellow-airman—one of the first accidents of the kind. His machine fell to earth, and when young Delcassé was extricated from the wreck, his limbs were broken in four places. He made an extraordinary recovery, in which his indomitable will helped him, and, in a few months, was ready to fly again. Again, in the war, he was one of its first victims, being wounded in an early engagement and taken prisoner by the Germans the while his father did his duty in his old post of Foreign Minister in the Government of National Defence.

M. Delcassé thinks little of personal comfort and convenience when it is a question of serving his country. His exile to Russia not only removed him from home politics at a particularly interesting moment, when such a question as Three Years was being discussed, but deprived him of the society of his wife and daughter, whom he left behind in his modest house in the Boulevard de Clichy. Madame Delcassé is the widow of a former Deputy for Ariège, which department M. Delcassé has represented in Parliament for a number of

years. To an interviewer he confessed that he cared little for the externals of office. "I am a Parisian," he said, "and have the Parisian's simple tastes." As I said earlier in this article, he might have been Prime Minister on several occasions, but he has always refused the office. His reluctance to accept the position is not unconnected, I repeat, with a dislike to label himself a party man. If he belongs to the Radical Left he places national interest above the caucus. On all great questions he votes as a patriot and not as a partisan. His appearance in the Ribot Cabinet as Minister for a day—a record in brevity—at least proved his patriotism, for it represented allegiance to the principle of Three Years.

This is the picture of a politician who is certainly one of the most notable in contemporary France. No breath of scandal has ever touched him. During the years that he remained at the Quai d'Orsay he never employed the special and early knowledge that he acquired there for his own advancement, thus exhibiting a good taste which might well be imitated in some other countries. His is scrupulous to the point of returning railway passes when he has ceased to be a Minister—a delicacy rare enough in France to mark a man above his fellows. He has faults, of course, but they are due to the ardour of his temperament rather than to defects that commonly

belong to meaner men. If his disregard for Germany at the Quai d'Orsay really caused a danger to the country, it was because other departments of the State were not directed with the same fearless energy and high efficiency as his own. He has been accused of too blind a faith in Russia, specially at the moment of the Russo-Japanese War; but the fact that he was *persona grata* with the Czar and his Government aided materially to his success in Petrograd, where problems were raised needing personal prestige as well as experience and *savoir-faire*.

"Renunciation is abdication" is one of his mottoes, as applied to France, and it well expresses the temper and intelligence of this strenuous little man.





M. BRIAND.

## ARISTIDE BRIAND<sup>1</sup>

ARISTIDE BRIAND is the charmer of the Chamber. His voice has peculiar melody in it, and even his enemies are fascinated and half-convinced when he speaks from the tribune. His rich baritone contains an almost feminine quality of seductiveness. It has stood him in good stead in his journalistic as in his political career. He came first from the provinces to Paris as the secretary of a Socialist organisation ; later, he entered the *Lanterne* (then, as now, the keeper of the Radical conscience) as a political writer. It was said that he alone could turn aside the wrath of the irascible director of the journal. After a few moments' conversation with Briand, he emerged smiling and mollified. In the Chamber his influence is much the same. If his enemies do not smile, they find their arguments loosened by his sweet reasonableness and insinuation. Yet, in appearance, M. Briand is not the charmer. The countenance is not distinguished-looking, save for the penetrating but

<sup>1</sup> Vice-Président du Conseil and Minister of Justice in the Cabinet of National Defence during the War.

impenetrable grey eyes. He has the heavy eyelashes and thick drooping moustaches of the country gendarme rather than patrician features. Part of his popularity with the masses is due to the air of mysterious melancholy which envelops him. He seems to have lived and suffered. His cheeks are hollow and his appearance is worn and somewhat fragile. He would be much less appealing if his face wore the look of insolent happiness that belongs to some successful statesmen. His stooping shoulders seem as democratic as his simplicity of manners.

His past is frequently invoked against him ; it is extraordinarily picturesque. A man who has never had a past seems scarcely to deserve a present. His enemies, and they are many, are constantly producing some revolutionary skeleton from his cupboard. Did he not put flowers on the grave of Emile Henry after that anarchist had been executed for bomb-throwing in the *Café Terminus* ? And was he not associated with Sébastien Faure, the prominent revolutionary ? Then, too, he defended the notorious Gustave Hervé on the charge of suborning soldiers from their duty in the pages of the famous *Pioupiou de l'Yonne*. It is true that Briand himself has never been anti-militarist, and dissociated himself, later, from Hervé, who, in his turn, became patriotic—but this does not prevent people from reproaching Briand the statesman with

the misdirected zeal of Briand the advocate. Yet at the moment that he pleaded for Hervé, the latter had not preached desertion in face of national peril.

His first speech in Parliament caused a sensation. It was an indictment of the middle classes, which had sanctioned bloodshed in a strike. Two miners, brothers, had been killed by the carbines of the *gendarmerie*. The speech was the more impressive because it was unexpected. No one supposed that the silent and rather commonplace-looking deputy was capable of such eloquence. The same cause of the wage-earner inspired his last speech as counsel in 1904. The tribunal, moved by his argument, censured the employers, who had used, also, firearms against the mob. No doubt his championship of labour gained for him the suffrages of St. Etienne, the large industrial centre which had sent him to Parliament two years before. Geographically, as well as temperamentally, this town of miners, factory-hands, metallurgists, and railwaymen is far from his native Brittany, with its rock-strewn shore and its hillsides covered with golden broom. And yet, even here, amongst the devout Bretons, he has many friends. A flag flutters from a village church close to St. Nazaire when he arrives in port, and the good village *cure* is proud to shake him by the hand. His popularity, to some extent, is due to his taste for the sea. He loves it in all weathers. He is not merely the

summer sailor, though he spends his Parliamentary vacation on board the yacht *Gilda*, but he loves the sea for its own sake, for the rude solitude it gives him ; for, like many thinkers, he glories in an isolated taciturnity. Before the *Gilda* he had an open seaboat called after his own name, *Aristide*, in which he spent many hours between sea and sky. Fishing, too, attracts him, and he has tried unsuccessfully to induce his friend, President Poincaré, to share his enthusiasm.

In the ordinary sense, M. Briand has no sporting tastes. When in office he rented a shooting estate not far from Paris, to which he could invite his friends, and fishing takes him a few days each session away from the city ; yet, I imagine that in both pursuits he thinks more of the exercise or of the rest and change than of the sport itself. They are mere excuses for recreation that he may work the more. He walked a great deal when he was still friendly with Jaurès ; but here, again, the walk was but secondary, and the Socialist chief must have found his companion silent and brooding.

He has won a reputation for laziness that the late Duke of Devonshire might have envied ; yet, he is often working when he is supposed to be doing nothing at all. Indeed, one may say that he does not cease to reflect and to create. He has distinctive methods of preparing a speech. Without writing a line, he thinks out the different heads and then

elaborates them. He memorises the language and never falters in the arrangement.

A great deal of thought goes to the preparation of his speeches. Some have marvelled that he seems never to open a book or consult notes when delivering one of his great orations in the Chamber or at a political meeting. But that is not M. Briand's way. He is never to be seen surrounded with documents and laboriously adding line to line. His speeches have all the glow of extempore productions and all the perfection of prepared speeches. Before they are delivered they have been heard, generally, by some friend. The listener is the critic whose advice is sought upon the form or the matter of the utterance.

This is his plan of work. The resultant speech is vivid and spontaneous and full of charm ; it suits exactly the time and circumstance in which it is delivered. That, again, is another secret of his platform success. By his method of mental preparation he can adapt himself to the mood of the moment and the temper of his audience. The speech remains fluid and plastic, and changes can be effected in it, at the last moment, without damage to the context. His talent for improvisation enables him to establish instant contact with his public. There is the evident purpose of persuasion in his oratorical utterances. And you recognise in

the winning gestures and in the voice that remains melodious and varied in its tones, even when high-pitched, the delicacy of his processes. He is subtle, he is insinuating; he yields ground that he may gain it in another direction. He is a born tactician, a master of dialectics.

He developed this gift from daily, almost hourly, contact with the hustings. His youth was hard and strenuous. He had little money to spend, even upon his studies, still less upon his pleasures. Long hours in a café at St. Nazaire were whiled away in discussion with political committees and individual debaters. This Coggers Hall was the best preparation for a Parliamentary career. That accounts for the fact that he can produce, at a moment's notice, a speech logical and well-reasoned.

A signal instance of his powers was the passage through Parliament of the controversial Separation Law, which divorced Church from State. It was much criticised by the Catholics, since it embodied the principle that the Concordat—the compact with the Church made by Napoleon—could be denounced without the consent of the Vatican; but, apart from this, it could be considered as an equitable measure. The French Episcopate seemed prepared to accept it, had not the Pope intervened. But this fact does not diminish M. Briand's achievement in getting the Bill through Parliament. For thirty years it had been talked about by ardent

advocates of the change ; but none had produced a working measure. That was left to M. Briand, a simple deputy, to do. Elected Reporter of the Committee, he made his reputation and opened the way to Ministerial rank by the fairness and adroitness of his proposals. When asked to carry the law into execution as Minister of Religions (as well as of Public Instruction) he could not refuse. This was the explanation of his entry into a bourgeois ministry, which so incensed the Unified Socialists. By associating himself with middle-class Government, he broke for ever with the *Incorruptibles*.

And yet his presence in the Sarrien Cabinet was a patriotic necessity, for the Rovier Cabinet had ineffectually tried to execute the law and had only succeeded in provoking disorders. But his acceptance of office was a great offence to his old party—as well as a great advantage to the country at large. He showed wise and moderate tendencies in the exercise of his functions whilst remaining a Socialist at heart. He has never really changed his label. He does not deny his past ; he is still inspired by generous ideals. His ambition is to marry the Carp with the Rabbit : capital with labour. He has changed only his methods of accomplishing the union. He supports Republican institutions because in no other way can anything be accomplished. He is a man of realisations, he tells us ; that is, the practical man. He has seen

that this dream of perfect justice and equity on the earth cannot be realised, and he turns to paths that at least lead somewhere. In a crisis the Charmer becomes a man of action—even his speech becomes active.

In office as Premier he had singular difficulties to contend with, requiring resourcefulness and tact. There was a point where diplomacy failed, when words became useless and action necessary. The postal workers came out on strike, and to them were joined the railwaymen and an army of other workers. There were no trains, telegrams, or letters ; business was at a standstill. It looked as if Paris would be starved into capitulation before organised labour, and that the industry of the country would be paralysed. The Charmer at once proved his quality. He ceased to look for an agreeable solution of the conflict and tackled it *manu militari*. The railway strikers were called up as Reservists, and those who resisted were arrested as deserters. The vast majority, who had been intimidated by noisy agitators, gladly accepted the obligation. The back of the movement was broken ; M. Briand had proved himself to be a man of iron as well as of velvet—a man of realisations.

Jaurès accused him of illegal methods of repressing the strike. It was an arbitrary and tyrannical use of power to quash a labour dispute by military means ; it was interference with the liberty of the

individual. The arguments were the familiar weapons of the Socialist. But even here, after a temporary check, M. Briand won a brilliant victory. The occasion was so exceptional that the Chamber sat on a Sunday. In a crowded House and in a sweltering atmosphere Briand stood his trial for having saved the country. In a passage of strong dramatic power he said, stretching out his palms to the benches: "Look, there is no blood on my hands." Every hearer realised that he had stemmed a dangerous movement without sacrificing a single life. Such a feat proved that he was a strong and yet prudent man. He had won by an active moderation. In his early unregenerate days, when he seemed to be flirting with revolution, he inveighed against violence and said: "We Socialists have a horror of blood spilled even when it is the enemy's." So it was in tune with his past that he should prove himself strong and energetic that he might be moderate.

By reason of his great grasp of public questions and of his intimate knowledge of the social forces in France, he is invaluable to any Government; he is the indispensable man. He can rise above the limited view of the sectary and take in a wide expanse of political country. Indeed, his severest critics would say that he has opened up new horizons. His speeches have the patriotic and statesman-like ring, and he realises that the law-

maker of to-day has, by his wise legislation, to anticipate and discount the social revolution.

His Report on Separation brought him great renown. It was a closely reasoned document, very clever and subtle; but his enemies declared that the original document was full of faults of history and anachronisms of all sorts. Emperors and Popes who lived in different centuries were made contemporaries. But even if these blemishes really existed, they could not militate against the success of the measure or detract from the achievement of the man who, in a few years, has metamorphosed himself from a revolutionary into a sober statesman. The explanation of the change lies in the touch-stone of reality that he has applied to all his aspirations. The question he had to ask himself is: "Is it realisable? Is it practicable?"

He possesses the quality of assimilation to an extraordinary degree. He can acquire facts at great speed by merely glancing at documents or in conversation with an expert. From these elements he will build up a marvellous discourse which will make its effect later in the Chamber. There is a freshness and unwonted fragrance about these orations, to the preparation of which such little apparent effort has gone.

I have spoken already of his difficulties as a young man. His origin was quite modest. His father was the keeper of a small café at St. Nazaire.

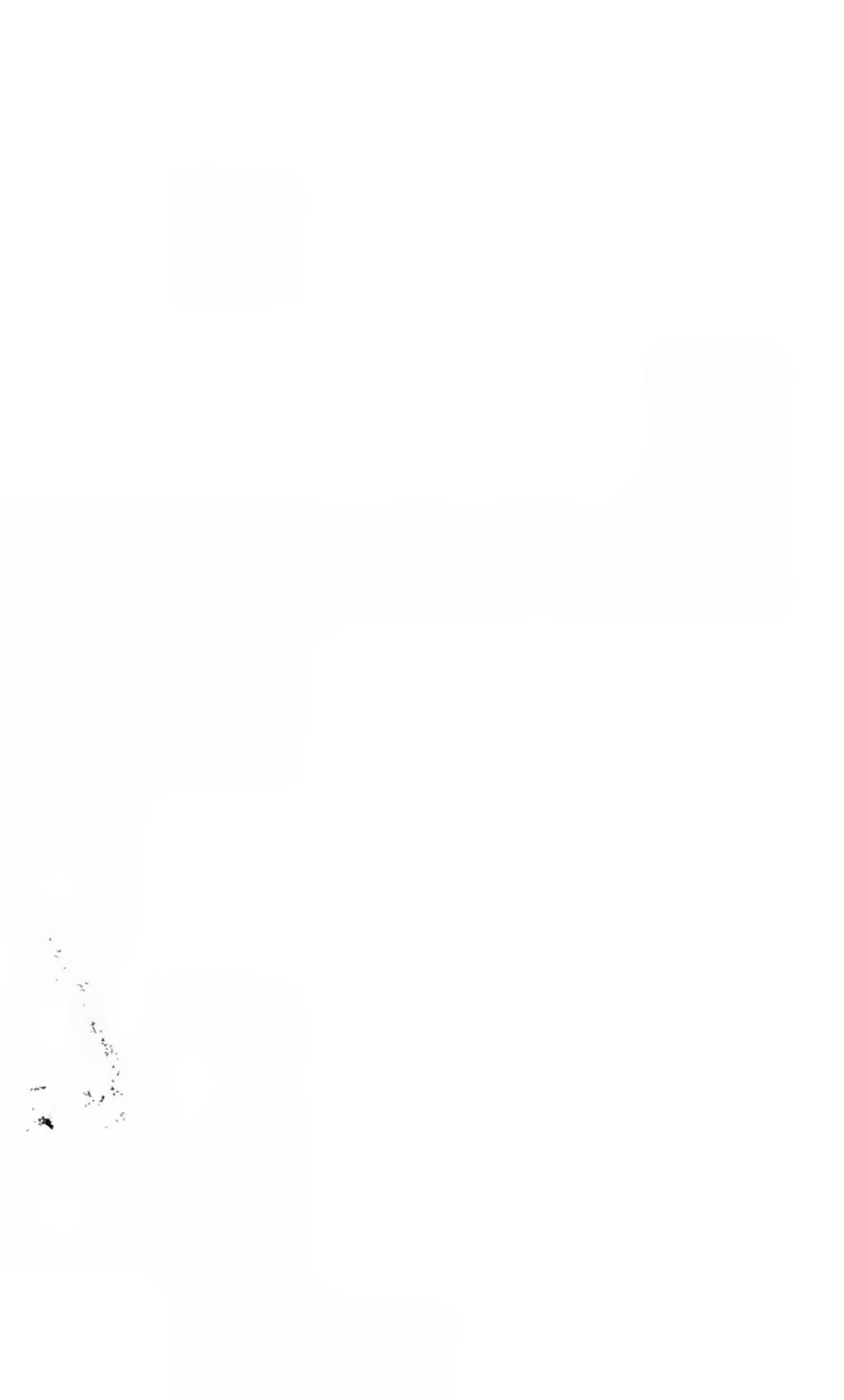
In the early days when he worked with Sébastien Faure on the staff of the *Journal du Peuple*, he was invited by the Labour Exchange at Rennes to give a lecture on social questions. At the last minute Briand telegraphed : "Impossible to come. No boots." This laconic dispatch so moved the hearts of the comrades that they sent round the hat and raised a louis, which was sent to Briand. The boots were bought and their wearer delivered the lecture. One of the chief contributors to this little fund was a young and rising professor of the University of Rennes. Years later, when M. Briand became Minister of Public Instruction and *ipso facto* head of the educational system in the country, he met his former benefactor, now risen to be professor at the Sorbonne, and had the pleasure of shaking him heartily by the hand.

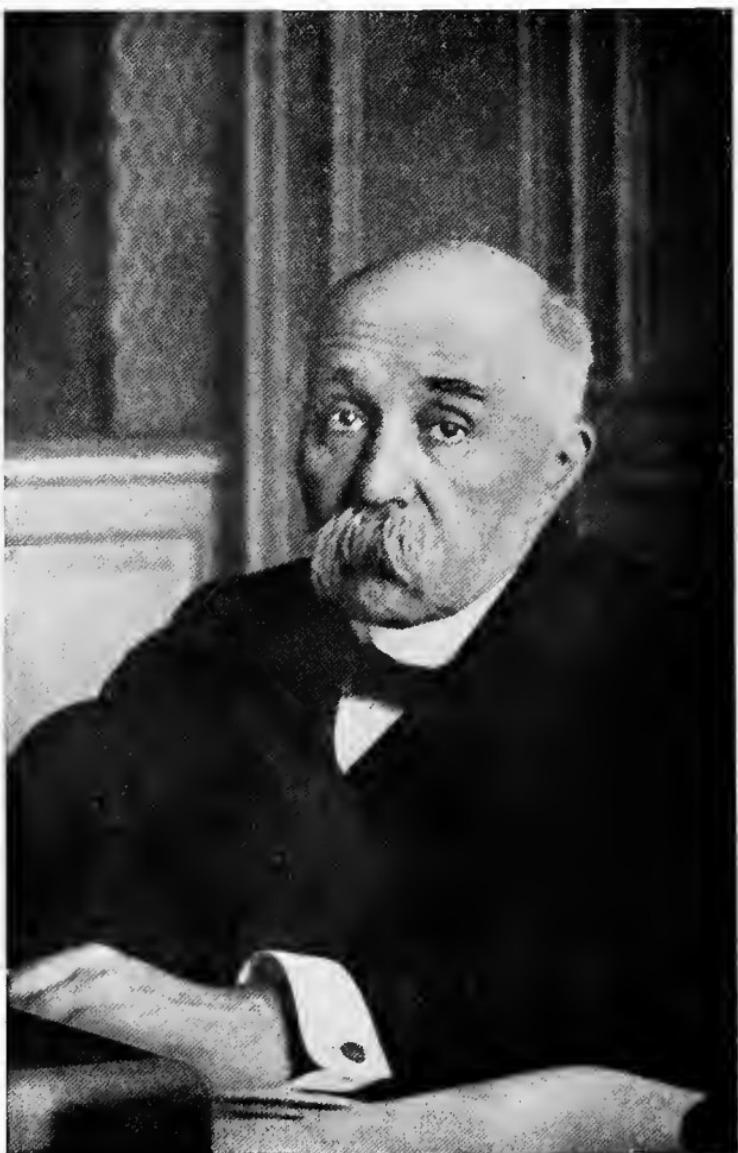
There is no politician who has been more severely attacked than M. Briand, and yet there is none more honest and disinterested. Still under fifty, he is destined, certainly, to become Premier again. His more notable speeches live in the memory. One of the most remarkable was on the subject of unity amongst French people. "If I experience a great joy at being in power, it is not because of vainglory," he said, "but because a happy chance seems to have rendered the hour propitious to the union in the Republic of all reasonable French people, who recognise that there

is no real prosperity in a country divided against itself.

“The secret of our policy—of my collaborators and myself—is to promote an affectionate regard for the Republic. We wish to make existence under it so agreeable, so fine and generous, and to raise it so high above all parties that it will represent the beauty of historical France and the France of the future.”

This is an admirable summary of the political ambition of M. Briand. Nor did his failure to found a new political party at the General Elections of 1914 weaken it. It was due to local causes, one of them being the state of his health.





M. CLEMENCEAU.

## GEORGES CLEMENCEAU

GEORGES CLEMENCEAU is one of the most original figures in Europe, original by reason of the quality and variety of his talents, original by reason of his career. It is certainly original to come to office, after political prominence all one's life, at the age of seventy ; it is certainly original to make one's *début* in literature at fifty-four. Clemenceau began by being original at birth. He insisted on being Radical and Jacobin in the Vendée, which is the country *par excellence* of Royalists and Chouans. But if he disdained tradition in one direction, he followed it in another, for he adopted his father's profession, which was that of a doctor, with his politics, and inherited, equally, his unpopularity with his Royalist neighbours. It was in the days of the Second Empire, when Republicanism carried with it a positive disadvantage. And so I suppose his youthful spirit received its ironic bent from contact with rustics who resented his attempt to bring in what he considered to be a régime of reason and enlightenment. Even in the Latin Quarter, as a medical

student, he could not keep out of trouble, but wrote with ink that grew red on his pen point. He edited a small sheet called *Le Travail*, and associated with him was Emile Zola and other ardent spirits of the Pays Latin. But the publication had a short career; its young editor was arrested for preaching Republicanism, and the paper ceased to appear.

In America he followed the Federal forces as a doctor, though he was not yet fully qualified. Later, he taught French in a girls' school and married a young American lady of good family, Miss Mary Plummer.

But a man of his temperament was not long to be kept from Paris, where exciting events were happening. When he returned, the Empire was tottering to its fall. In the commune he was Mayor of Montmartre and had an extraordinary influence over the light-headed inhabitants of the "Butte." Two generals sent to parley with the mob were shot. Clemenceau was strongly blamed for it, but in reality he arrived too late to prevent the summary execution, even had he been able to do so, which is doubtful. His policy, none the less, all through this distressing time, was conciliatory. He strove to reconcile notions of liberty with the paramount necessity of authority. He has always defended liberty, but he has always believed in government.

His speech on amnesty for the political exiles, when he was returned by a large majority to the Chamber, gained for him the close attention of the House. He did not carry his point, but, some years later, Gambetta employed many of his arguments in his famous speech which restored the proscribed to their families. Then Clemenceau began his astonishing Parliamentary career, which lasted twenty years. It was astonishing for its destructiveness, and Clemenceau became known by the terrific name of "Tombeur de Ministères." As if to justify that name, he upset Ferry and de Freycinet and proved a dangerous enemy to Gambetta. He accused the last named of being of the essence of the dictator in wishing to govern for himself instead of for the people. To Jules Ferry he attached the sinister appellation of "Le Tonkinois," because of his colonial policy in Indo-China. It went clanking through his political career like a tin pan tied to a cat's tail. The retreat at Langson of the French troops before the Chinese, though only of relative gravity, exasperated the Parisian public to the highest pitch and resulted in the downfall of the Ferry Ministry. Clemenceau accused de Freycinet of mishandling the Egyptian question; but in this case he argued too well, for his enemies declared that he must be in the pay of the British Government. His constituents

in the Var greeted him with cries of: "Aoh yes!" in presumed imitation of the English, when he went amongst them. There could be no more damning innuendo for a rising politician than to be the "friend of England"—and not the disinterested friend either. The allegation was that he was bribed to keep France out of Egypt by suggesting that she should not join in the campaign against Arabi Pasha—whilst England worked her wicked will. Of course there was no word of truth in it; of course England does not employ her secret funds, such as they are, to bribe foreign statesmen; but that made no difference. The people who hounded him from office, led by a newspaper of large circulation, were not particular to a fact or two. The object was to throw mud, and plenty of it, and that object was fully attained. M. Clemenceau retired into private life.

Nor was the opposition against him wholly due to Egypt or Indo-China; it was due, also, to Boulanger. He fought Boulanger tooth and nail and reduced that inflated person to his proper dimensions. The Opposition never forgave him for that or for his slashing articles in *La Justice*, which he founded about this time. Round him was gathered a brilliant group, including Camille Pelletan, a better journalist than Minister of the Marine, Stéphen Pichon, excellent both as writer

and practical diplomatist, Gerville Reache, and others of equal prominence.

The cool shades of private life, to which M. Clemenceau retired in 1893, were very profitable to him. After the fierce battle of twenty years in the Parliamentary arena he was glad, perhaps, of an opportunity for contemplation, of putting his intellectual house in order. And he explained his attitude in the Chamber by remarking wittily : "I have defeated only one Ministry ; it is always the same." But a temperament such as his does not retire from the campaign merely to hang up armour in the hall with no thought of further battle. M. Clemenceau changed arms : that is all. He fought with pen instead of speech, and his battleground was the Press instead of Parliament. Under his trenchant direction the *Aurore* became famous for its biting and yet picturesque criticism. His articles on the Dreyfus case were celebrated. They had much to do with the Captain's ultimate release and rehabilitation. Clemenceau was converted to the cause, I believe, by a pamphlet published in Belgium. He began by being hostile to the Jew, but when he saw the irrefragability of the other side, he changed over and became insistent for justice. His articles were marked with energy and showed rare qualities of logic and analysis. He can lay bare

a question with a speed, accuracy, and sureness of hand that few can equal. And so he became the great journalist after he had become the great Parliamentary critic.

Clemenceau's literary style resembles his oratorical style. It is direct and penetrating, sharp and incontrovertible. If it is impressionist rather than classical in form, it is none the less the journalism of literature. His speeches have the same clear excellence. They are remorseless, flashing, naked in their truth and penetration like a sword's point. Sometimes his oratory resembles shrapnel. The shell bursts, causing death and destruction to Parliamentary reputations. His onslaught upon Jaurès was a classic example. The Hector of the Socialist party retired hurt from the encounter and nursed his wounds in the tent. Clemenceau, with a mocking smile playing round his lips, administered one blow after another in the great fight for bourgeois principles. For, though he has played at revolution, he has never been at heart a revolutionary. He has always leant heavily on the side of order and discipline.

His years of retirement gave him time for writing books. Some were novels in a philosophic vein; others were the collection of scattered articles in the Press. One of the most remarkable of these publications is *La Mélée Sociale*; he has

also written *Le Grand Pan*, *Les Plus Forts*, and *Le Voile du Bonheur*.

In *La Mélée Sociale* there is a remarkable preface which gives a good insight into his philosophy. He insists on the remorseless character of life and yet shows that, if we have not faith in the consolations of the Church, we need not despair, but devote ourselves to alleviate distress, to a combative altruism, which shall slay the demon of selfishness and enlarge our own sympathies. We need not fear that the end is in sight; there is always work for willing hands to do; there is no prospect of the dead centre of existence being reached. The source of all progress is the conflict between self-interest and the good of others. It is easy to help on some good cause.

“No more war, no more hunger on the earth, no more cold; every one insured against vicissitudes, no more poverty, no more misery. What employment for human activity!” Then again: “Progress consists in the extreme culture of the individual. Let us make a society profitable to us all and not merely profitable to some.” These pages contain sword-thrusts at conventional beliefs, at the self-complacency of Scribes and Pharisees. The Christian often acts as if he had an eternal letter of credit upon the Almighty. And he adds scathingly: “On voit bien que le fils d’Abraham a passé par là !”

In *Au fil des Jours* he tells the story of an old gipsy who dies by the roadside, leaving his caravan and donkey to the tender mercies of his neighbours. After his death they ransack his vehicle and discover poultry and other property. "Ah," they exclaim, "they must have been stolen!" The *garde champêtre*, out of pure pity, no doubt, took off the donkey, and the contents of the caravan disappeared as if by enchantment. "The devil must have flown away with them," was the explanation of the village wiseacres. "I prefer to accept this version," says the author, "rather than hold that my neighbours profited by ill-gotten goods." Later, the wife of the gipsy appeared and claimed the good man's estate. The village was scandalised and cried: "Hou, hou, la voleuse!" It required all the diplomacy of M. le Maire to get the old woman to depart and leave the villagers in peace with their own scrupulous regard for *meum* and *tuum*.

Nor is he merely essayist and novelist; he is an admirable art critic and has written a successful play. *Chang I.* is Emperor of China and is afflicted with blindness. An operation removes the obstructing veil and he sees—sees the faithlessness of his wife, the perfidy of his friends, the cold calculation and lack of affection of his son. And he elects to be blind again.

Clemenceau's attacks on Jules Ferry have

aroused more criticism than perhaps any other of his political acts. He considered that the country was not ripe for colonial experiment, whether in Africa, Asia, Tunis, or Cochin China, and so he said : "Let us develop France before we go abroad. Let us employ our energy and our capital for our own industries and our own concerns. Cannot we have better roads, for instance, in some of our departments ?" His irony showed itself in mocking allusions to the benefits of Western civilisation, as applied to people with a far older system. And so the Ministry fell, and Ferry barely escaped with his life from a mob which tried to thrust him into the Seine. Clemenceau's temper resembled Robespierre's, and he was ready, like him, to say : "Périssent les Colonies plutôt qu'un principe."

Clemenceau is known as the "Tiger." In a certain sense the title is inappropriate, for there is nothing feline in his appearance. He looks more like an old guardsman under the Second Empire, with his round bullet head, his bushy eyebrows, and drooping moustaches. His manners, too, with people with whom he is familiar, or does not know at all, are apt to be a little cavalier. He affects to be *goguenard*, which to some extent is in accord with his character. He is a strange combination of the man of action with the man of thought. He has joined life to intellect,

activity to reflection. An early riser and extremely abstemious in his habits, he is capable of a great deal of work. At his house in the Rue Franklin he has a garden in which peacocks strut and shriek amidst the cooing of pigeons. From his place in the centre of a circular table (which is as original as the other things about him), he can survey the scene with a pleasurable sense of country quiet. There is no politician of the day whose intellectual life has been more strongly developed. He is an excellent Hellenist, and somebody discovered him reading Theocritus in the original on a *chaise longue*, thus realising Macaulay's definition of a scholar.

The boldness of his thesis, as well as the originality of its treatment, gained him the ear of the Faculty when he took his degree. He has been always bold, knowing no fear—a temperament of steel. Perhaps his greatest achievement is to have maintained his courage on a ruined digestion.

In office Clemenceau was confronted with extraordinary difficulties. The critic became the creator. Not only was he faced with a formidable strike in the north, following on the great mining disaster of Courrières, but in the south a Separatist movement seethed. It was under the theatrical leadership of Marcellin Albert. M. Clemenceau had original ways of dealing with both outbreaks. He refused to regard them as serious

until events obliged him to seek actively for remedies. Then he went to Courrières and investigated for himself. He entered the miners' cottages and talked to their inmates without the least formality. On one occasion he visited a music-hall whilst a strike meeting was in progress, and lectured an excited group on the uses and abuses of liberty. The spectacle of a Prime Minister in tweed suit and felt hat haranguing hard-featured men and women in working garb in the garish surroundings of a *café concert* was at once novel and stimulating. But, in spite of these original methods, M. Clemenceau did not conjure the crisis. He had to fall back upon the old-fashioned remedy of force. He mobilised a large number of troops ; there was some fighting and bloodshed, and he was severely criticised again.

In the south his action or inaction led to the farcical collapse of the movement, which owed its origin to the failure of the vine-growers to sell their produce on profitable terms. Too much wine and too much water were both responsible. When the agitation had reached its zenith, Clemenceau ordered the arrest of the "prophet." The latter escaped to Paris ; when he arrived there, he walked straight into the Ministry of the Interior to lay his case before the Premier. That astute man of business saw his opportunity and took it. He lectured the "prophet" and told him there must

be no more trouble, no more incendiary talk, or he would be clapped into prison. "Perhaps you are in need of money—a little money to take you home?" he asked pleasantly. The simple peasant, whose silvery voice had charmed thousands from his flat roof-top at Narbonne, fell into the trap. He accepted "the advance," and a hundred francs passed from the Premier's pocket into the peasant's. Thereafter his power was broken; he had sold himself to the enemy. The Republic within the Republic was at an end, and the administrative life of four departments, which had been practically at a standstill, was resumed.

As to whether Clemenceau in office proved himself a constructive statesman is open to question. His methods are scarcely successful as a means of government; he possesses the *esprit moqueur* so dangerous and so characteristically French; but, at least, he never fails because he fears the consequences of action or because he would lose in popularity or sacrifice votes at the election. He is never small or mean-minded; but he may be dangerously indifferent. In any case, "an elegant solution" does not offer always a lasting remedy. There is in his character, perhaps, a touch of the comedian. He likes the dramatic effect in the great white light of the stage. Very few Frenchmen, even the greatest, can resist a desire, sometimes, to pose before the camera; and one has

suspected this tendency in Georges Clemenceau at various periods in his career.

And yet he has ever shown himself to be alert, resourceful, vigorous, a representative of the old spirit as well as the new. And when I say "new," I mean that spirit of resistance against morbid influences which has manifested itself recently. He has stopped the rot and shown backbone in a crisis. He did not yield weakly to pressure from Berlin. The courage of the Gallic cock showed itself. There was no vain rustling of feathers, but a brave salute to the morn, a cheery self-confident call to the national energies and to patriotism to assert themselves. He is essentially the patriot. When in office, in November 1908, the Kaiser's Government suddenly asked for an apology for the Casablanca incident of two months before. "There will be no apology," said M. Clemenceau, and there was none. Germany did not insist. This was in contrast with the supineness of M. Rouvier, who, in June 1908, drove M. Delcassé from office at the bidding of the Wilhelmstrasse.

It is for this reason that M. Clemenceau deserves a place amongst the artisans of New France. Whilst remaining distinctively French, and the whole character and equipment of the man is French, he is pro-English as well, not in the sense of slavishly copying the English, but in admiring and encouraging those virtues of resourcefulness,

independence, courage, and control that Anglo-Saxons believe to be especially their own.

It is interesting to find a man well advanced in years who retains, as M. Clemenceau does, his devotion to the cause of liberty. This is, perhaps, because he is the Peter Pan of French politics. But he makes mistakes even as the youngest of us does. A common instance is his failure to recognise that Jacobinism is only transitory, born of the moment, which does not represent the aspirations of a people as a whole. In the same way the English Puritans imagined they were laying down a line of conduct for all time in sternly resisting the light spirit of the day. And Clemenceau on his part resisted electoral reform. He is perfectly disinterested in this attitude, for as a senator he is removed from universal suffrage, and the electoral college which elects him would be unaffected by Proportional Representation. Yet his opposition is unshakable, even though M. Briand was able to show in the Chamber that the majority of the deputies had put it in the forefront of their programmes.

It is one of the curiosities of French politics that A, who has supported B, rends B on the morrow in order to attack C; and here you have the explanation of the defeat of the Briand Cabinet. The last piece of picturesque destruction by M. Clemenceau—not counting his frequent articles in *L'Homme libre*

—was aimed at M. Poincaré, who had been installed one month before at the Elysée—through his late political associate M. Briand. Clemenceau does not approve of President Poincaré, for the reason that he did not approve of Gambetta. His life has been consistent: none can gainsay that; he has adhered to his principles; but he has not realised the changes that have taken place in public opinion during the last forty years. He has changed very little; why should others change? This is the explanation of his attitude towards M. Poincaré at Versailles and his enthusiastic support of M. Pams. The Republic required a colourless President in the past, therefore it must require one now. His ideal is the impersonal Chief of State who shakes hands with both hands, like a true democrat, who bestows decorations and presides at national ceremonies—a President, in fact, who would never play the rôle of General Monk.

In the same way, in attacking the “R. P.” or Proportional Representation, he was attacking a principle which he regarded as dangerous to the State. He recollects that Boulangism had flourished under the system of the “R. P.” and it might give birth to a new agitation of the sort. It gave too great power into the hands of Cæsar, and the old and tried politician was nervous of its possibilities. Clemenceau has not realised as clearly as some of his contemporaries the failure of

party government and the discredit of sectarianism in France. At Versailles he tried to renew his success as Grand Elector of the President. When Caserio's knife had deprived the Republic of Carnot, in the streets of Lyons, Clemenceau startled Paris by declaring on the poster of his journal : "Je vote pour Loubet."

In my conversations with M. Clemenceau I have been struck with the broad Imperialistic tone in which he discusses world-polities. He is of those who believe that England should not shirk her continental responsibilities. On the morrow of the passage of the Three Years' Bill through the Chamber the statesman observed to me : "It is for England to decide. France has shown the way." With nearly every thoughtful Frenchman he realises that England must assume the military rôle that circumstances have thrust upon her. Did not England send troops to the Peninsula ? Was Waterloo won by Nelson ? Can a naval victory terminate a campaign ? Can sea action paralyse the enemy ? Can it strike at his heart ? He sees that if England persists in her traditional path of voluntary enlistment the *entente* fails in its real potentiality.

Numerous are the stories told of Clemenceau to illustrate his mordant humour. Of a prefect, to whom he had given an audience at the Ministry of the Interior, he asked : "Your district is famous

for capons, is it not, M. le Préfet ? ” The Prefect agreed. “ Then send me one, je vous prie,” observed the Minister. The Prefect readily assented, but declared, at the same time, that he had a more worthy present to offer M. le Ministre. “ And that is . . . ? ”—“ My book on local topography, printed on India paper,” responded the proud author. As the Prefect rose to go, his hierarchical chief observed finally : “ Oh, by the way, all things considered, I think you might send that capon.”

Because Clemenceau is a patriot, because he believes in a strong France, because he will not tolerate the menaces of a foreign Power, because he was one of the first to support the principle of increased effectives—in response to that menace we give him readily a place in the Panthéon of the New France.

## JEAN JAURES

[JEAN JAURÈS was the first victim of the War. He was assassinated on the eve of the French mobilisation—on the last day of July 1914—as he sat at dinner in a small restaurant near his office of *L'Humanité*. The weak-minded author of the crime appears to have been incited to it by older men, who fled after its commission and could not be found. Though it was late in the evening, the news spread quickly throughout Paris as if disseminated by agents. These circumstances give the impression that the crime was the result of a plot to embroil the Socialists with the Government in the midst of a national crisis. If plot there was, it signally failed, for the Government, as well as the Nationalists, expressed its abhorrence of the deed, and the Socialists refused to be detached from their allegiance to the common cause. Jaurès was absolutely sound on the War, and in his last articles counselled his party to coalesce with the country.]

The burly form of Jaurès, crossing the Pont de la Concorde on his way to the Chamber, suggested a more literal interpretation of the expression, “a formidable idealist,” than is usually given to it by



M. JAURÉS.



the French. If his mind was occupied by the unsubstantial notions of an ideal world, his figure was solid and bulky, and his gestures awkward and ungainly. He went through so much physical exercise, when addressing the House from the tribune, that perspiration rolled from him. He put his whole force into everything ; that was the note of the man. Napoleon said a commander never won a battle by keeping his troops fresh for the morrow. Jaurès acted on that principle ; he threw every available man into the trenches : all his energy, persuasion, and oratorical power. It seemed often as if he spoke in vain, for the Government obtained its majority just the same, and his generous principles were rejected either as impracticable or as pure confiscation ; but, occasionally, he was rewarded by upsetting the Ministry. Such an occasion presented itself in December 1913, when the Premier, M. Barthou, was endeavouring to pass the Finance Bill to cover expenditure on operations in Morocco and the re-establishment of a Three Years' system at home. Jaurès hit the House in its weak spot : its sense of logic, when he insisted that it could not vote a loan and exempt the Rente from taxation, since it had approved the contrary principle five years before in adopting the Income Tax.

But, ordinarily, Jaurès was not so successful. He talked and talked, but the vote was not changed.

This is particularly true of Morocco, which never ceased to interest him since the days when “Pacific penetration” was first talked about. Then came the era of military activity, and Jaurès delivered immense orations occupying several days. The House listened, or it did not listen, according to its mood; but the Government got its majority just the same.

Jaurès had, none the less, a great international position as well as authority amongst his own party in France. In England, Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland he was regarded by Socialists as one of the great constructive thinkers of the day.

Social questions always interested him—even when he sat in the Chamber as a good bourgeois Republican of the Left Centre. He reversed the ordinary process. He moved from the Moderate camp to the Extreme Left, whilst M. Briand, M. Millerand, and some other of his old associates have descended the “Mountain” and come into the plain of ministerial office. Jaurès avoided office. He adhered loyally to the resolution of the Congress at Amsterdam, which ruled that there should be no compromise with any bourgeois Government. This principle has become weakened, but at that moment it was held to be scandalous for a Socialist to associate himself with capitalism, militarism, and the other concomitants of middle-class rule. Had

he cared, he could have entered the Cabinet when M. Combes was Premier. He was then at the zenith of his power.

Jaurès had been a Socialist since the commencement of the century. He was then returned on the Socialist ticket for the department of the Tarn. He was born at Castres, in this department; taught philosophy in a lycée at Albi, and finally moved to Toulouse as assistant-professor at the University. It is typical of the man that his doctor's thesis, necessary to a professorial career in France, dealt with such questions as : "Socialism in Germany" and "The Reality of the External World." There is something captivating in the fact that he discussed the theories of Carl Marx and Lassalle in Latin, whilst his French treatise was metaphysical in turn, and dealt with the substantiality of existing things. It is a proof that he was, above all, a philosopher.

With Jaurès, philosophy, indeed, was a guiding principle. He was immensely learned. There was no politician in Europe more qualified to argue abstruse problems of the mind. He was a great classic, and had Guglielmo Ferrero's faculty of visualising the past. Sometimes in his walks abroad with a favourite companion—for Jaurès was a great walker—he would evoke some antique hero and conjure up, perhaps, Antony and Cicero, and make them talk, as

if they were living personages in contemporary France.

He was an omnivorous reader, and had a prodigious memory. He could memorise whole pages and repeat them faultlessly. His favourite pastime, on a ramble with a friend, was to quote from some little-known poet, and inquire innocently : “*De qui sont ces vers ?*” Very often his companion, who might be a professional in literature, did not know, and Jaurès, with schoolboy glee, imparted the information. He had the gift of recitation, which might be envied by many an actor. He made poetry live under his fire and emphasis. Professor Renard, of the Collège de France, was his frequent companion during the summer holidays, and, in a boat on the Tarn, the Socialist Tribune and Socialist Professor recited together verses of a favourite writer. Jaurès delighted in nature, and found her in her grandest mood in his own department. The gorges of the Tarn are world-famous, and there are other natural features in the neighbourhood which are almost as remarkable. The Socialist leader liked his scenery on the big scale : sea and mountains, and great sweeps of valley and moorland. He exhibited the same taste in poetry, preferring the clarion-voiced Hugo to such a lute-player as Alfred de Musset.

Jaurès was intended for the professorate, and entered the Ecole Normale Supérieure after his

lycée days in Paris. From this institution, which is filled, mostly, with young men without fortune, but possessed of a thirst for knowledge, Jaurès became, as I have said, assistant-professor at Toulouse, his subject being philosophy. He was a great success as a lecturer, and women as well as men crowded his theatre. His oratorical gift, as well as his popularity, brought him civic distinction, and he became Deputy Mayor for the southern city so renowned for historic monuments. Toulouse is noted, also, for its orators and singers. Not far away, at Cahors, was born Gambetta, whom Jaurès resembled in a certain oratorical manner.

It would be difficult, and, perhaps, a little idle, to establish a comparison between Jaurès and English orators. He had the lofty ideas of W. E. Gladstone, and something of his personal magnetism; when he spoke he elevated the debate, but he did not possess the Parliamentary tactics of the G.O.M. Indeed, he was no debater, but an orator pure and simple. He was always worsted in his forensic encounters, either with M. Clemenceau or M. Briand. If he had not Gladstone's religious beliefs, he had his own notions of a divinity and a marked tendency towards mysticism.

A great foe of the Three Years' Service in the army, he changed his attitude on these questions less than Gustave Hervé, whom he defended for his anti-militarism, and thereby lost a good

deal of sympathy in the Chamber. Hervé, as I have said elsewhere, has altered his views and become patriotic. But Jaurès was remarkably consistent. He had his own scheme of a citizen army, with which he regaled the House from time to time ; but it seemed a little incomplete, like his picture of the Future City, which he contributed to a Socialist review and never finished. So that we shall never know, in all its details, the Utopia that will exist when the followers of Jaurès have full sway upon this earth.

Whatever may be said of his political tenets, the speeches of Jaurès are admirable in form and imagery. They glow with ardour, they are instinct with the love of humanity, they palpitate with a reforming zeal. Actuated, evidently, by high principles, by a broad and sweeping idealism and by a fondness for wide horizons, there is nothing mean in them, nor in the nature which actuated them. He could not stoop to baseness. Even his worst enemies have never accused Jaurès of interested conduct or of making money out of his professions ; but we have heard many stories of his fortune.

Let us see in what it consists. We have seen references to his castle in Germany, and to his great estates. His castle was nowhere, if not in the air ; his great estates consisted of a few hectares round his country house in the Tarn, producing,

possibly, a rental of £60 a year ; moreover, it belonged to his stepmother, who has survived her stepson. Following the Southern system, Jaurès had a *métayer*, that is to say, he divided the profits of the land with a farmer. His residence in Paris was on a yet more modest scale. It was situated in the Rue de la Tour, and formed part of a group of middle-class residences, in a retired corner. The house is quite simple. It is entered by a couple of steps. To the left is a small drawing-room, to the right is the drawing-room ; the kitchen is at the back. Three bedrooms are upstairs, and, on the floor above, is the library where Jaurès worked. It was in the greatest disorder, with books littered on every chair. The furniture was fashioned out of pitchpine, and common wooden shelves held the books to the walls. There was no attempt at luxury of any sort.

The Jaurès family has no fortune. His father died young, and his mother brought him up somewhat austerey ; his uncle was Admiral Jaurès. His brother, Louis Jaurès, is commander of a warship, and was captain of the *Liberté*, which blew up in Toulon harbour at a terrible cost of life. Captain Jaurès was accused of permitting slackness amongst the crew aboard ; but it is doubtful if such a charge was justified by the Opposition Press ; he gives an impression, on the contrary, of an excellent disciplinarian. He resembles his brother to a

singular degree, in physique as well as in voice ; but he is his direct antithesis in mental characteristics. The orator had very little order in the arrangement of his papers and personal effects ; he was absent-minded and forgetful of small details, whereas the sailor-brother revels in the minutiae of life, and was seriously disturbed at the presence, say, of an ink-spot on the wall-paper of his brother's villa. Like most men who go down to the sea in ships, he is fanatically exact in everything. He never talks politics, and therefore had no occasion to quarrel with his brother. Socialism, however, is by no means a family trait—like a Bourbon chin or a Napoleonic nose. The late deputy had two or three relatives in Paris who had no sympathy with his views ; but that did not interfere with his affection for them.

He had the warm nature of the South. An indulgent father and husband, he was capable of doing a great deal for his family. He would have asked favours even for them, I believe, if it involved no sacrifice of principle ; but he sought nothing for himself. His wife, a Mlle Bois, was the prettiest girl in Albi, where Jaurès, as I have said, taught in the lycée. She refused him twice before she consented finally. Perhaps she was influenced a little by his personal appearance, which was wanting, always, in elegance. He did not disdain clothes, but he thought there were things more

important in life. He rarely wore evening dress, and astonished and sometimes vexed hostesses by appearing at a ceremonious dinner-party in his working garb. This happened on one occasion when he was invited by Mme Waldeck-Rousseau to meet some distinguished people. Jaurès arrived at the house in a black jacket much stained with ink, a fancy waistcoat, and striped trousers which, braced too high, revealed patent leather shoes, probably considered by their wearer as quite sufficient for all social purposes. The butler's scandalised eyes, when he had opened the door, had fallen upon the disreputable straw hat that crowned the Deputy's head, and had braved the storms of his beloved Tarn. But these things were all forgotten in a few minutes, under the charm of his conversation.

Doubt was expressed whether Jaurès would wear evening dress as Vice-President of the Chamber—an office which fell to him early in his Parliamentary career—but he had no option here, for it is the official uniform of the House.

Mme Jaurès belongs to a Catholic family, and, long after her marriage with Jaurès, continued her religious observances. In this she showed greater independence than the wife of many a Radical deputy. There is none so intolerant as the professed keepers of the Republic's conscience. Socialists are wider in their anti-Clericalism than

Republicans of the Combes type. This was shown in the Bill drafted by M. Briand—then unconverted from his extreme views—for the Separation of Church from State, which was more equitable than the measure imagined by *le petit père* Combes himself. In this, the executioner of the religious Orders seriously suggested that a commissary of Police, wearing his scarf of office, should attend every religious service, so that he could stop the curé from making disrespectful allusions to the Republic.

Jaurès' two children were baptized, and were afterwards confirmed; but Mlle Jaurès was civilly married, at her own request, to the young engineer who is now her husband. Her mother is much less Clerical than she was a few years ago, and has been detached, to some extent, from the Catholic Church, by the *trop de zèle* shown by some of its champions in attacking the Socialist deputy.

The object of these attacks never answered them either publicly or privately. He speedily forgot that his enemies existed, and exhibited a similar oblivion in smaller matters. In conversation, for instance, he became so absorbed that he was unconscious of everything around him. One might give an amusing example of this. One day in summer in his country house in the Tarn he was sitting at table with friends, who included Maître Millerand,

the Socialist lawyer, Professor Georges Renard, the ladies of the party, and Jaurès' two children. The meal proceeded gaily enough, and Jaurès was in his most brilliant conversational mood ; but he gave his guests no wine. When his attention was called to it, he made ample amends, but left the bottle uncorked. It was a hot day and flies were plentiful. Some betrayed an unholy desire to explore the bottle. This was more than the precise mind of Maître Millerand could stand. "Mais bouchez donc la bouteille, mon ami," he said, a little querulously. Jaurès paid no heed. Millerand corked the bottle himself. Jaurès uncorked it to take another supply. "Mais bouchez donc . . ." repeated Millerand. Again no attention from Jaurès. Presently, in desperation, M. Millerand seized the cork and inserted it in the neck of the bottle every time Jaurès served the wine. This little comedy was continued until coffee was served.

His unbusinesslike habits made Jaurès a mediocre manager of the fortunes of his paper *L'Humanité*, of which he was the able, if somewhat erratic, editor. The Socialist organ has been in difficulties on at least one occasion, but, contrary to a common story, the money offered by German sympathisers was not accepted. The funds of the paper are derived from two sources : (1) the regular subscribers ; (2) private donations. The latter were

often attracted by Jaurès' eloquence at some banquet, and, after he had sat down, a large cheque, bearing some well-known name, would be handed to him. The administration of the money was probably not such as would please a chartered accountant, but there has never been the slightest suggestion of impropriety in its use. The deputy-director, certainly, did not become rich by these benefactions. His total income would not exceed £1500 a year, the earnings of a moderately successful professional man in France. This sum was made up of the 15,000 francs he received as deputy, his salary as editor of *L'Humanité* and as Paris correspondent of the *Dépêche de Toulouse*, one of the most widely circulated papers in provincial France.

When *L'Humanité* started, it had three editors : M. Jaurès himself, M. Briand, and M. de Pres-sensé, the then foreign editor of the *Temps*. It began in luxurious offices in the Rue Vivienne, in premises which, oddly enough, belonged to M. Lépine, the Prefect of Police. Upstairs were the editorial offices, and, in two separate rooms, sat two different categories of the staff ; the apartment reserved for the Triumvirate was on an upper floor. Though peace was preached in the columns of the paper, it was not practised by the personnel. A feud existed between the writers and the sub-editors. The former were recruited from the

Sorbonne, and were young professors and doctrinaires ; the latter were professional journalists, and, when they touched up the somewhat irregular prose of academic learning, learning did not like it in the least. Nor was there greater calm in the upper storey. The three directors could never agree upon the policy of the paper. Jaurès would retire for the evening, having arranged for the articles. In his absence would arrive another director, probably M. Briand, who changed everything ; and none was more astonished than M. Jaurès himself to see the contents of the paper on his breakfast-table.

In the less elaborate offices in the Rue Montmartre, whither *L'Humanité* removed, M. Jaurès reigned supreme, for it was not long before he ceased to look upon M. Briand as an ally.

It was in the Rue Vivienne that the last phase of the famous railway strike, during the Briand administration, was played out. The members of the Committee of the Confédération Générale du Travail were arrested by M. Lépine and his officers in the editorial rooms of the journal, and, sitting in the very chair occupied by Briand when, as a militant Socialist, he had advocated a General Strike, was the leading member of the Committee —a coincidence not without its piquancy or its premeditation.

Jaurès was faithful in his attendance at the

House, and in this resembled M. Vaillant, the veteran chief of the independent section of the Socialist party. Jaurès' preoccupation in the debate was remarkable. He fastened his eyes upon the orator, and leaned forward, in an attitude of great earnestness, as if anxious to catch each word, and to intervene at any moment. One of the first to arrive, he was one of the last to go.

I have spoken already of his indifference to appearances. It extended to all the small affairs of life. His packing, on the eve of a journey, was a perfunctory and laughable performance. He thrust everything into the portmanteau, and shoes, shirts, books, and trousers formed a kind of salad. He punched the articles into place and asked a friend to sit on the trunk whilst he attempted to strap it. One can imagine the state in which the garments arrived. Yet, if he cared nothing for clothes, he was not insensible to the joys of the table, though his palate was robustly superior to the refinements of the cuisine. An excellent digestion enabled him to swallow anything.

This is an intimate picture of a particularly attractive personality, which, until its premature and much to be regretted disappearance, was playing its part in the development of modern France. It may be that his opportunity for constructive statesmanship had passed before his death, but Jaurès is one of the forces that has undoubtedly

contributed to the moulding of French policy at home and abroad. A remarkable discourse, in favour of amity with England, which he delivered in the early days of the *entente*, does justice to his heart and brain, as well as to his perception of the international interests of his country. And there we will leave him—in the grave whither he was hurried by an assassin's pistol—the first victim of the War.

## LOUIS BARTHOU

M. LOUIS BARTHOU came into office in sensational circumstances. The Briand Cabinet, which had undertaken the defence of the New Army Bill, had fallen to a sharp frontal attack by M. Clemenceau. Something like dismay spread through the country. Who could take office in such circumstances with any hope of success? A measure of this magnitude could not be left to its fate; it was vital to the nation. Who was the man strong enough to carry it through? It was a task that required boldness and persuasion as well as adroitness. Suddenly the name of Barthou was pronounced. "Who is he?" the Boulevardier asked in his usual spirit of mockery. He was scarcely known even to the café politician, for he was not one of the personalities who are picturesque in Parliament. It is true that he was respected at the Chamber and had held important office—he had been Minister of the Interior for two years, twice Minister of Justice, and three times Minister of Public Works; but he had cut no figure in the public eye, and had been content quietly to do his duty.



M. BARTHOU.



Such a mission was sufficient to try any nerves, and to courage had to be added those other qualities which I have enumerated. Did M. Barthou possess them all? It appeared doubtful. Nor did his friends altogether trust his capacities in such a crisis. For a man untried in the highest office, it was surely too much to expect that he could handle such a situation. But M. Barthou assumed his responsibilities with quiet confidence. He was not a Béarnais for nothing, and in that glorious air of the Pyrenees he had acquired the physical vigour and control invaluable in great enterprises. His good humour, too, so necessary to Parliamentary popularity, was indigenous to the soil of that old Province of Béarn which came to France at the accession of Henri iv.

Presently it was clear not only that he was "making good" in the ordinary sense of efficiency, but that he was achieving an astonishing success. And then it must be said that the nation itself rose splendidly to the occasion. It realised that its very existence was bound up with that of the Bill. Public opinion, often so curiously indifferent and ill-informed in France, was emphatically on his side. The blood tax was increased, but the mass of the people accepted it in a manly spirit. "The Republic of concierges," as some one has scornfully called it, proved its patriotic superiority over the "nation of shopkeepers"; for what British

Premier would dare to introduce a Bill that enforced national service even under a militia system?

Barthou, in any case, had opposed to him a considerable section of his own party; indeed, one may say that half the Radicals neutralised the other half. It is one of the achievements of his persuasive eloquence that he was able to carve out of the Chamber of Deputies a new majority, which enabled him to place this momentous measure on the Statute Book, and, more remarkable still, he convinced the nation of the necessity of the new Bill.

Not for the first time, Provincial France showed itself more keenly conscious of the national duty than Parliament; and almost before the project was voted it received the emphatic approval of the southern populations, who welcomed a popular general with the cry of "Vive les Trois Ans!" Within the House itself, M. Barthou had to encounter the formidable battery of Jaurès. The Socialist leader not only attacked the principle of the Bill, which he declared to be an act of aggression and a wanton addition to the burdens of the people, but he also claimed to set up military reasons against it. His tremendous speeches were full of allusions to the tactics of the great commanders of the past as background for his argument that it was not numbers which prevailed

in the shock of battle. Jaurès, indeed, had many military theories of his own, which surprise professional soldiers, but perhaps the most wonderful is his citizen army with elective officers.

M. Barthou had to listen to these and other arguments during the scorching days of a June and July in Paris, and for two solid months the battle raged, until the newspapers became one mad welter of talk and the Chamber itself a poisonous swamp of flies, tobacco smoke, brandished fists, unparliamentary language, tintinnabulation of presidential bells, strident interruptions, and ceaseless chatter. The one man who kept his temper and his head was Barthou. He was never at a loss for a word. His speeches were marvels of impromptu eloquence, and yet were adequate to the most serious subject. He has the gift of instant speech, like his friend Aristide Briand, and, if he cannot equal that statesman in the breadth and brilliancy of his appeals, he has a felicity of phrase which is priceless in a Parliamentary crisis. How often has he saved his party from defeat by a happy formula. His ability to skate on thin ice with speed and elegance earned him the grudging admiration even of those who were most eager for his downfall.

And so, day after day, he was at his post ready for any emergency. If he was attacked, he knew how to defend himself; if, on the contrary, a sortie

was necessary, he charged the enemy with true French *furia*. The strain was almost intolerable, but M. Barthou was supported by a strong sense of duty and a conviction that the safety of the nation depended upon him. He seemed to be made of iron.

None but a superior physique could have saved him, but M. Barthou was always smiling and serene, and emerged from the most exhausting sittings in a state of comparative freshness. Such physical fitness, and his amazing gift of improvisation, enabled him to win the battle. Conscious of having done his best, he was content to leave the result to the Providence that watches over all conscientious effort. His youth and energy, he declares, come from his addiction to Swedish exercises. Each morning before the open window he practises the health-giving system, which bestows suppleness and wards off age.

As a young man he was fond of bicycling, but of late years he has substituted walking for the more fatiguing form of exercise. He has no favourite sport, not even fishing, which beguiles the leisure of M. Briand, as it did that of Waldeck Rousseau. Had he been attracted to the gentle art of Izaak Walton, he would have found scope for his talent in the trout streams of Oleron, in which town he was born and passed his youth. The district round Pau provides most excellent

sport with rod and line, and many a splendid fish haunts the pools.

Barthou *père* is an ironmonger at Oleron, and still conducts his modest business. Sacrifices were necessary to secure the lad's education in the law school at Bordeaux. The future Premier, however, never practised, but plunged at once into politics. An opportunity came early in life—at twenty-seven—to show his quality. He was asked by an influential group of Republicans to oppose the sitting member—the Baron La Caze. Barthou had neither money nor influence ; his opponent had both, as well as the prestige of a name. Member of the Jockey Club, he was wealthy and well-connected, and about the same age as his Republican rival. The latter made up for his lack of means by an immense activity, and an eloquence which left the other far behind. He was elected after a bitter struggle, by the narrow majority of 150, and he has retained the seat ever since.

Like M. Poincaré, who is his opposite in most things, he has been “young” all his life. He was twenty-seven, as I have said, when he became Deputy ; at thirty he was Minister of Public Works in the Charles Dupuy Cabinet ; twenty years later he became President of the Council. His friends were surprised that he took the comparatively small post of Minister of Public Instruction in the

administration of which he was the head. The real reason is that he has more the soul of the erudite than of the politician. He is devoted to reading, and a portfolio of secondary importance left him greater leisure than the Ministry of the Interior, which would have left him none at all. But it gives a Premier great advantage to have his hands upon the guiding reins. He would have preferred the English system, which enables a Premier to dispense with any portfolio; but the disadvantage of such an arrangement in France is that most politicians need the stipend that attaches to a ministerial post. It is true in M. Barthou's case, for he is unblessed by private fortune.

His passion for reading takes him out of bed betimes; his eyes being weak, he prefers the morning light, and works as little as possible at night. His favourite author is Victor Hugo, for whom he has a positive cult. In his charming "appartement" in the Avenue d'Antin he possesses some Hugo MSS. which are priceless to the bibliophile. Had he known Hugo personally,—the great man died in 1885, when Barthou was still in the Pyrenees,—one imagines that he would have become his most faithful disciple, sitting diligently at his feet, and listening to his Olympian wisdom.

Even in his busiest political hours Barthou finds time to consult the catalogues of book sales. His

great joy is to handle rare editions or to pore over the faded ink—the blood and tears—of some writer of the past. These literary explorations represent to M. Barthou the highest romance, compensating for the lack of it in modern politics. That he is so set on serving his country is proof of his spirit of sacrifice, for his temperament accords better with a life withdrawn from the struggle of parties and given to the quiet joys of literature. But when he speaks he momentarily forgets all the annoyances of office. His voice is less moving and profound than M. Briand's, but it is agreeable to hear; it is full of warmth and colour, and has unexpected notes in it. He belongs to the Democratic Left—the same shade as M. Poincaré—and is thus a Radical Patriot. Perhaps his greatest political triumph was when the House ordered his speech on Three Years, delivered on July 4, 1913, to be placarded throughout France. Public "affichage" is always an honour to a statesman. And that speech, which was a crushing reply to M. Jaurès' attack upon the Bill, was improvised. There is a certain wayward grace and spontaneity about M. Barthou's utterances that one rarely finds in the prepared oration.

The great point in his appeal was the non-political character of the Army Bill. It was a necessary national work, he insisted, to which all parties should subscribe. The defence of the country

had nothing partisan in it ; hence, he could properly ask the support even of the habitual Opposition. On the other hand, in such a question as Proportional Representation, involving the electoral system of the country, he would naturally feel that it should be voted by the Republican elements of the Chamber.

Barthou's charm and persuasion, enabling him to pass a measure so intrinsically unpopular as a great addition to the military burdens of the nation, are characteristically southern ; so, of course, are his powers of speech. It is customary in France to chaff the Méridional, who is so often boastful, theatrical, and expansive. This is particularly true of the Marseillais, who resembles the immortal Tartarin. And yet one wonders what French politics would be like without the South—without its fire, its imagination, and its brains. Facts flourish in the North, but ideas come from the South—the ideas that give life to facts and interpret them, just as steam supplies life to the boiler.

But M. Barthou's South is not the South of Tartarin, but the South of Henri iv., whose accession brought the ancient Province of Béarn to France. The peasantry of this region are lighter and gayer than their neighbours the Basques, who share the gentle melancholy of the Bretons. The peasant will give you an answer and

an exact direction, and has even a notion of humour—rather rare in agricultural France.

M. Barthou, as I suggest, has derived his talents from the soil, his vigour and fondness for fresh air, in the literal as well as in the Ibsen sense of moral and physical health, from the inspiring scenery of the Pyrenees. These qualities, then, have contributed to his success as politician. At least it can be said that he never courted office any more than he clung to it. Having accomplished his prime task of mastering the revolutionary activity of the C.G.T. or Confédération Générale du Travail and securing the passage of Three Years, he was quite willing to depart, content to have done his duty. And his determination to adhere to a detail in his financial measure—the immunity of the Rente from the operation of the Income Tax, which led to his undoing—proved his indifference to office.

## ELIE METCHNIKOFF

SINCE Pasteur, there has been no scientific figure of quite the eminence of Elie Metchnikoff. He is not merely a biologist and bacteriologist, but a great philosopher as well. Many scientists see no further than their laboratories; they have no precise idea whither they are tending. But Metchnikoff has followed unswervingly a certain line of study and development; he has always known where he was going. Even as a young man, studying the life history of worms and jelly-fish, he was accumulating from these remote and apparently inhuman interests the right kind of knowledge for his subsequent investigations. In an age of specialists, Metchnikoff belongs to that race of scientist philosophers who were students "in the splendid prime" of Darwin, Huxley, and Pasteur. This *ultimus Romanorum*, looking out upon the world through kindly eyes, behind his spectacles, seems to divine the very springs of human action.

Metchnikoff's world-wide renown comes, of course, from his fight against old age. He tells us there is no need to grow old before our time;



PROFESSOR METCHNIKOFF.



that we are stifled out of life by intestinal poisons. His system consists in clearing the soil of its rank growths and introducing good workers into the vineyard in the place of bad. His gospel shatters illusions, but is of singular comfort to those who realise that they must live according to science and in obedience to nature.

"If there can be formed an ideal able to unite men in a kind of religion of the future, this ideal must be founded on scientific principles. And if it is true, as has been so often asserted, that man can live by faith alone, the faith must be in the power of science." Only one person in a million, he says, dies a natural death. Cultivate your intestinal garden as you would your terrestrial one; learn to grow the right kind of flora there, and the result will be longevity.

We all die a violent instead of a physiological death; we are hurried out of life because we have neglected to take into account the disharmonies of nature. This word "disharmony" occurs often in *The Nature of Man*, which contains the philosophy of Metchnikoff. The so-called "harmonies and finalities" of nature make Metchnikoff smile—the ironical smile of the zoologist. Where a creature is absolutely adapted to his environment, there exists harmony; there is disharmony where he is not strictly adapted. There are many causes of disharmony in nature.

There is the discord of man's sexual instincts with the present state of civilisation ; there is the disharmony of his organism, which has survived from his early evolution. The large intestine, for instance, served for the coarse food of his tree-living ancestry, and certain other structural peculiarities, which appear to have no immediate use, are relics of a long-distant past. Doubtless there is disharmony in our manner of living, for we have retained to some extent the dietary of former days, and exchanged, at the same time, a wholesome existence in the open air for sedentary occupations. Human misery and suffering are due to the disturbance of our organic equilibrium, whence arise discords in our frame.

Metchnikoff launched his astonishing doctrine of longevity upon the world only a few years ago. From twenty to fifty, a man should live for his family and for himself; from fifty to a hundred, for science and humanity, and after a hundred for the State. What a contrast with the dreary lot usually reserved for old age to know that one can devote one's experience to humanity with the quasi-certainty of possessing the strength necessary to work. Metchnikoff believes that matured wisdom should serve the State. "What mistakes would have been avoided," he remarked to me, "if reformers had been older. I do not know if Lloyd George becomes more prudent with

the years," he questioned slyly, "but I know that in my own country the reform movement has suffered through the impetuosity of youth, which has provoked a disastrous reaction."

Politics, he says, ought to be treated as a science, requiring preparation. Instead of that, every adult considers himself qualified to exercise the franchise. The only excuse for this is that political science is as much in its infancy as was obstetrics until recently. When sociology is more advanced, there will come about a differentiation such as there is in medicine. Then people who have acquired great experience through their years, and have preserved all their faculties, thanks to their physiological constitutions, will render most valuable services to the State.

Since veterans will have charge of politics, there will be a greater inducement to them to extend the cycle of their existence. One has to aim at old age—physiological old age—the old age that is perfectly natural and has nothing precipitate about it, and then, when the end comes, it will be calm and peaceful, like the soft sleep of a tired child. This happy state is attainable by us all, if we begin early enough to reform our diet, to eliminate the poisons from our system, and to take measures against infection. Metchnikoff himself did not begin until he was well over fifty; but he has none the less profited by it. Perhaps he

would have succeeded even more strikingly if he had discovered earlier in his scientific career that the friendly microbe of longevity lived in the dog. It would have made him more friendly, evidently, to the dog, for, in a certain famous article in *Je Sais Tout*, he rejoiced over the approaching disappearance of the stray mongrel from the streets, and a consequent diminution in rabies, as a result of the motor-'bus. Poor beast!

Science, no doubt, has sacrificed the lower creation to the needs of the higher. At the Pasteur Institute the lay mind sees what it regards as a melancholy menagerie condemned to die. There are unhappy-looking monkeys inoculated with disease, cancerous crows, rabbits unconsciously nibbling to their doom, little white mice hopelessly condemned. And as I passed one of the corridors I saw a black-bearded giant in a long white overall carrying by its tail a white mouse dripping with gore. This is a disharmony to the sensitive soul; but, says Metchnikoff, vivisection is necessary, and veterinary science is in advance of medical science, for the reason that animals can be experimented upon whilst men cannot be.

I know Anglo-Saxons, especially the golfer, better preserved and more physically vigorous at seventy than Metchnikoff, but they have not gone through the exhausting labours of laboratory research. The savant is still able to work, and to direct and

advise the labours of young men. He is proud of his energy, and relates with much satisfaction that he has need of fewer holidays than his assistants who are many years younger. Indeed, when he takes a vacation, it is that he may work the more. During the month of July, for instance, he will betake himself to some village in a forest close to Paris, and there he will ardently carry on his work, which is subject to frequent interruptions at the Pasteur Institute, for he cannot altogether exclude the world from his laboratory. Science in its higher branches makes great demands on those who practise it, and many are forced to abandon it before they attain the age of the Russian. Though his beard is whitening, his luxuriant hair is only tinged with grey. But, relentlessly, old age creeps on in spite of science —that is the tragedy of it. If Metchnikoff has given new hope to the aged, he has given also a warning to the young. Since their object should be to live as long as possible, they should not try to exhaust all the sensations that life can give. A strenuous pursuit of pleasure, he seems to say, is but a natural reaction against the prospect of a morbid old age. Luxury is harmful to happiness, for it hinders the full development of life. Let us go back to simpler ways, to simple food, and simple clothes. The Biblical Jews lived longer than modern men because their tastes were less complicated.

Metchnikoff does not dissipate his energy in drawing-rooms. He leads the quietest of lives in his villa at Sèvres, in the midst of the forest, on high ground overlooking Paris. His wife is Russian, like himself, and is an artist of considerable talent, besides being interested in science. Half the day Metchnikoff spends at his home, the other half at the Pasteur Institute. Here he holds the position of sub-director of the Institute ; but he occupies himself as little as possible with the details of management. I doubt if his salary in this capacity exceeds £300 a year. He has an income from his books and, also, presumably, from the soured milk that bears his name ; he is medical man to a large firm of provision dealers, and treats the staff in a fatherly way ; but in any other profession he would have gained much more by his talent and industry. Yet he has put by a certain amount even if he is romantically generous in the use of it. He was much attached to a young girl who came frequently to the Institute and was courted by one of the assistants there. The pair had no money, and so could not marry. Metchnikoff sent for them and said, "Mes enfants, don't worry about money. I will give the bride a dowry." And he was as good as his word ; his wedding present was worth, roughly, £20,000, for it represented rights in soured milk. Of a morning you may see the young woman riding in the Bois

in a splendid limousine, whilst Père Goriot walks or takes the humble tramcar.

Metchnikoff is amusingly democratic. He talks to everybody in the omnibus or tram, and generally succeeds in convincing them that they are ill. "But never mind," he says cheerfully, "I will give you the address of a doctor friend of mine; he will soon put you right." And young Medicus, a struggling protégé of the great man's, is pleased presently by the arrival of new patients.

Another of the great man's little ways is to purchase his own food. It is a solemn and serious process. He visits the barrows of the market women and buys with great care lettuce for his salad, vegetables for a plate of soup, and fruit for his dessert. Carrots, parsnips, potatoes are passed in review; it would seem as if a religious rite were in preparation. He gives a little good advice to the old lady who attends the stall. "You should wash your lettuce in hot water," he tells her, to her amazement—she who has found the gutter so much more practical! "And you should never let any one touch your wares," he continues. "Qu'est-ce que c'est ce vieux maniaque là?" asks the *marchande de quatre saisons*, as her customer departs. Some one informs her, "C'est le professeur Metchnikoff." "'Connais pas,'" she retorts, and turns to talk with her friend, the policeman.

After these preliminaries, over which he has taken endless trouble, Metchnikoff cooks his lunch at the Institute. It is not with subtle condiments that he prepares his food, but with infinite precaution. The cutlet that he has purchased from a neighbouring butcher is passed over the Bunsen-burner until it is disinfected ; the salad and vegetables are sterilised that no noxious microbes may enter uninvited the savant's system. His diet is a matter of definite calculation ; he balances one kind of microbe against another, and takes care that the right side wins in the intestinal battle. His first repast, he tells me, is a plate of vegetable soup ; it is followed by a pot of soured milk, washed down with a little weak tea—"not black, as you drink it in England," he says, with twinkling disapproval. After lunch, dates covered with Bulgarian bacilli are swallowed by the apostle of longevity. There is more milk at tea-time ; the dinner resembles the lunch : a little meat, sterilised vegetables, and a *compote* of fruit. For twenty years the master has eaten nothing raw, for in uncooked food lurk all manner of germs hurtful to our health.

His friends declare that he is too much of the hermit nowadays. He used to lecture on his favourite subject ; lately, he has given that up, to concentrate upon his laboratory work. The most exciting events fail to distract him from his

labours. When a crocodile, which had been placed in a hot room, suddenly revived and snapped lean, hungry jaws at the assistant, the sub-director was informed of it by an earnest messenger. "You must manage him yourself," he said sharply, as he locked the door against intruders amphibious or merely terrestrial. After all, what is a crocodile compared with a new microbe?

He grows intensely enthusiastic when he lectures, and sometimes breaks into German or Russian. He is astonished at the applause he receives from a body of students at the end of the hall. He has addressed them in their own tongue without being aware of it. He is much pursued by his admirers; the Americans are particularly insistent. Sometimes a mischievous assistant will point out a humble *garçon de laboratoire* as the great man; but should "the Professor" appear at the end of the corridor, he becomes, of course, the object of all eyes. "In that packet," says the guide facetiously, referring to a parcel in the savant's hand, "is M. Metchnikoff's lunch; he is going to cook it in his laboratory." And the recipient of this information, his eyes gladdened by the sight of the revered one, departs singularly refreshed and uplifted.

Homage, also, comes from the post-bag. Letters flow from all parts of the world asking Metchnikoff for his secrets. It is pathetic to find the number

of people who do not want to grow old. Has he not found a remedy for grey hair? The writer is a poor schoolmaster afraid to lose his post; cannot the great savant tell him how the colour may come back to poor faded locks? Another, without much understanding, has read the fascinating theory of a longer life. Will not M. Metchnikoff explain it in greater detail? To most of these communications the brilliant Russian turns a deaf ear; he has no time for writing letters; no secrets to sell for gold.

The Pasteur Institute is a shining example of disinterestedness in an age of commercialism. It is a little community of enthusiasts inspired like some mediæval brotherhood with the sacredness of its mission. Each has given up his all to follow science. Each sacrifices time and learning and his own money, for none receives any pay. Rumours of war, it has been said, pass them by, and changes of dynasty do not affect them; but if there comes from out the Orient news of some strange pestilence, then a missionary is ready, with test tubes and microscope in his wallet, to discover and combat the new disease. Pasteur being dead yet speaketh in his followers; his spirit still marches on. . . . Metchnikoff believes the day will dawn when the great scourges will disappear. Freed from these terrible preoccupations, humanity may then devote itself to its moral, mental, and

physical advancement. A new world will have been created of splendidly intellectual giants.

Meanwhile, there is necessarily considerable exaggeration in the pioneer. The popular imagination must be appealed to by the extraordinary and sensational. A man at Brighton walked daily on the Esplanade and, as he walked, he expanded his chest with a movement of his arms; in either hand he held a walking-stick. It was an impressive sight. That man became a local celebrity. He preached a great lesson: to walk upright with expanded chest. And I am sure that every little boy in Brighton obtruded that portion of that anatomy which he believed to be his chest with great promptitude and pride. Metchnikoff has not escaped the charge of over-emphasis. It has come perhaps from the people who have had the privilege of dining with him. It is not an unmixed joy, for, though his conversation is full of savour, the same cannot be said of his dishes,—and there are people to whom the soured milk is an abomination. But war, whether on microbes or on human beings, must be pushed to extremes if it is to succeed. In his own case, he declares, results are gratifying. Though he comes from a short-lived stock, he is still strenuous at seventy. His intestinal flora is free from poison; his system has got rid of indol, to which he attributes arterio-sclerosis and premature old

age. What is the pleasure of the palate compared with an enlarged span of life?

In this atmosphere of science, Metchnikoff has worked for thirty years. His fame is tremendous. Some years ago, a popular English magazine asked its readers to name seven of the most prominent men in the world; the name of Metchnikoff was on every list but one. Thus is proved his fame in England; it is great in America and in Germany; I doubt if it is as pronounced in France. He has had to endure a certain prejudice in the country of his adoption, prejudice partly due to his tendency *de tout dire*. "The French are decadent because of their dwindling birth-rate," he said on one occasion, and made it worse by declaring that national defects were due to France being a nation of first-borns. "Rabbits and other rodents," he continued, with the uncompromising frankness of a man of science, "often slay the first of the litter; they are conscious of its imperfections." Happily he did not suggest that a new Herod should arise to slay the first-born in France! But such a slaughter of the Innocents, even theoretical, was not approved, you may be sure, by the Chauvins who gather particularly in the French Academy of Medicine. That body is not as learned as it seems, and is sometimes given to foolish criticism of the distinguished and fearless investigator.

The homage of the world, however, compensates for the narrowness of French confrères, who endeavour to limit science by geography. For Metchnikoff is a Russian, and was born in a village near Kharkoff, in Little Russia. The neighbouring town gave him his lycée and his university, and Odessa his first appointment as professor of comparative anatomy and zoology. He studied the latter subject under Leuckardt, Henle, and von Siebold, at Essen, Göttingen, and Munich. It is characteristic of the man that he could brook no interference with his political opinions, and that is why he left the State university to enter the Municipal bacteriological laboratory. This was in 1882, after the murder of the Tsar Alexander II. had brought about vexatious and inquisitorial measures. The future successor of Pasteur was not a revolutionary ; but he thought that politics and science should be kept apart. A few years later, in 1888, Metchnikoff joined Pasteur in Paris, and then began his career under the master, whose mantle was to fall eventually upon his shoulders.

Pasteur did not discover the existence of microbes, which was revealed by Jansen's microscope at the end of the seventeenth century ; but he described their rôle in the human body, by establishing the microbean character of disease. Though he made vaccines, he did not develop the

theory of immunity which it was left to Metchnikoff to give to the world.

The latter's theory is that the body is provided with good warriors to fight the bad. When the home army is weary and no longer able to resist incursions of the enemy, then old age and disease creep in—they are almost synonymous terms in the lexicon of Metchnikoff. Phagocyte or white corpuscle should be ready to fight the microbe and turn him out; when he is not ready, then, obviously, the constitution is at a low ebb. Metchnikoff discovered the purpose of white corpuscles in the human blood by studying water-fleas. From him has come our knowledge of the various agencies at work to strengthen or weaken these guardians of the body. Science some day, no doubt, will invent a new serum whereby the hypertrophied corpuscles may be vitalised and youth renewed even at an advanced age.

We have to die some time; what does it matter, a few years more or less? Marcus Aurelius said that he who made a short journey or he who made a long one must meet death in the end. Three years or a century are much alike—when they are over. But this is not Metchnikoff's view. At twenty-five we have not the same view of things as at fifty. After we have passed the first stage, we leave behind the pessimism of our youth—pessimism induced by the failure of reality

to coincide with our ideal—and we become more or less philosophical. Our tendency is to become resigned to the inequalities of existence, even to the disharmonies of nature of which Metchnikoff speaks so eloquently; we are no longer *révoltés*, but soldiers accepting orders that cannot be disputed. If glory comes in the course of duty, so much the better; but duty must always come before the glory. At the end is death; we accept it as we accept the duty. In youth we are grievously disappointed at the non-realisation of our hopes; in after years we are resigned on this subject as on many others. The actual journey, perhaps, yields more pleasure, for we are less eager to push on; we have no frenzied desire to reach the goal. What is the goal? We hardly know.

Metchnikoff has opened a great prospect of usefulness in old age, and thus removed one of its terrors. Enforced idleness is one of man's greatest deprivations as he advances in years. In his fascinating *Nature of Man*, which contains the greater part of his philosophy, the savant speaks of the terror which seizes upon even Christian souls at the thought of the extinction of the *ego*. How can the fear of death, which is at the back of most of the religions of the world, be overcome? Metchnikoff says we can replace the instinct of life by the instinct of death, so that we are ready to die. The "something accomplished,

something done" of a long life has earned the eternal rest. With extreme lucidity Metchnikoff gives us the philosophy of the great minds of the earth on the subject of death. Here is the wisdom of the ancients, there the suggestive reasoning of Spencer, of Darwin, Finot, and Max Nordau. The Russian savant cannot take comfort, as Finot does, in the "change of life" that results from the decomposition of our bodies—revolting thought to many sensitive persons—but he does find consolation in Maeterlinck's idea of a collective immortality, by which the body is resolved into its original elements. "Needless to look for our dead in cemeteries," says the Belgian writer: "they are to be found in air, in space, in light."

In this new world we shall all be strong and have no need of sympathy. Sympathy is in reality a reaction against evil; if there is no evil, sympathy becomes intrusive and impertinent. George Eliot in *Middlemarch* tells of the disappointment of an excellent young woman who found no object for her charity in the village in which she went to reside. Every one was too well off to need her help. Obviously, if humanity is more or less equal, mentally and morally, there will be little scope for what is called euphemistically "doing good."

Are not these theories merely the exaggerated form of egoism? Do they not tend to make a

man monstrously selfish? Is he not always thinking of his own development? Is he not willing to sacrifice everything to its own advancement, mental, moral, or physical? And yet the author shows that the higher we go in the scale of evolution, the more we are likely to become social in our instincts and, therefore, of value to the community. The cave dweller is the real Ishmael; his isolated life was the symbol of his sentiments towards his fellow-man. Indeed, amongst mammals there is very little of what we may call the larger family feeling. Monkeys are gregarious, but they do not possess that highly-organised existence in groups which belongs to certain insects.

This presents another phase in development, and then comes that curious thing, the psychology of crowds. Crowds are moved and swayed by sudden savage impulses. They kill upon slight provocation, for the mere pleasure of blood. Man, when subject to this sort of collectivism, descends several rungs in the ladder of civilisation; he draws nearer to his ancestors; he has become a "brute" in the literal acceptation of the term. It is disconcerting to find that some of the lower forms survive while some of the higher disappear. Notwithstanding man's pressing invitation to depart, the cockroach lingers on the road to progress, whilst higher forms have perished.

"The survival of the fittest" in human life is often the survival of the craftiest and most contemptible. But whatever particular application we give to this curious fact, Metchnikoff, as well as other optimists, has made out a good case by declaring that the higher the individual goes, the higher service he can render humanity. An instance of this might be derived from the household in which the master, much concerned for his own health, would see that his servants were suitably and hygienically lodged.

Even in the factitious schemes of Socialists has crept more than a grain of individuality. Leaders of the advanced school agree to exempt the private house from nationalisation of property. It would be difficult to separate the garden from the house, and there you have the beginnings of landed property against which Socialists are in rebellion. The ideal so often advanced, that a man should sacrifice his individuality to the community, cannot be regarded as in accord with the scheme of Nature ; if beautiful, it is unscientific.

And there is the other side of progress : the spread of knowledge will inevitably bring about a levelling of human fortune. The rich will be less rich, the poor less degraded. Sociology will learn from biology that in proportion as the organism becomes more complex, the consciousness of individuality develops. It is in low organised

creatures than individuality disappears in favour of collectivity. Having laid their eggs, many insects die; they have performed their function. The worker bee becomes sexless, that it may devote itself undistractedly to its work. In mankind there is no differentiation of the sort, and the mother, having ceased to bear children, occupies herself with infant education, and continues this loving solicitude even to her grandchildren. The more highly organised a being is, the more social become his tendencies. This is the teaching of Metchnikoff; to reproach him with it would be to reproach evolution.

Serenely Metchnikoff continues his labours, his eye glued to the microscope in the Pasteurian calm of his laboratory. Only occasionally the noises of a clamorous, banging world penetrate to his tower, evoking a smile of comprehension from the savant, who is devoting to humanity the fruits of a long life given to science. "There is no old age," he says, "save that pathologically produced. Live wisely and you will live long in the splendour of your faculties." Here is hope, here is courage, here is poetry joined to science and philosophy. It is the message of Metchnikoff, optimistic in the true sense of the New France.

## ANATOLE FRANCE

THERE is a story of the great man in London which at least is *ben trovato*: it is eminently characteristic. It was in the latter part of 1913, and he had accepted the invitation of a London committee to entertain him at dinner. He was stretched on a chair in an hotel near Trafalgar Square when the doors of the establishment were flung open and Carpentier, the boxer, appeared, escorted by a gesticulating crowd of Frenchmen. The pressure was so great that the proprietor of the hotel sent for the police to bar his doors against a further invasion. The elderly and alert Frenchman in the corner, his white imperial setting off his intellectual and æsthetic face, was in conversation with a friend when the invasion occurred. Leaning over the recumbent figure, the friend said something disrespectful of boxers. But the distinguished-looking foreigner rose to the height of his small spare body, his eyes flashing with a keen ironic light. "No, no," he said; "the man is a hero, almost a god. He seems to have descended from the great heroes of the past." With that he rushed forward, took the boxer by his two hands, and congratulated



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him warmly on his success of the night before. He had conquered Bombardier Wells, the English champion. And Anatole France, advancing to meet the hero of the hour, was also fresh from laurels which glistened on his brow—placed there after thirty years. “England is always thirty years late in her appreciation of the foreigner,” says George Bernard Shaw. She discovers Georg Brandes, the Scandinavian critic, when old and grey; she gives Sarah Bernhardt the greatest reception of her life when she is seventy; and she holds out a tardy and appreciative hand to Anatole France at the same age. None the less the welcome is really British—convincing and compensatory after the long neglect. And so France found it.

The slight fog which shrouds the streets of London even in the summer envelops his figure like a veil, through which he appears like a splendid visitor from Mars. And yet it is quite by chance that Englishmen were privileged to show hospitality to this gifted son of France. To an English friend in Paris M. France showed his letter of invitation with evident perplexity. What was he to do? Had he really to answer? His practice generally is to abstain—until letters have answered themselves—the Napoleonic plan. Even when they are of extreme importance the correspondents have to wait a long time for the

reply. But in this case a prominent name or two caught his eye, and he became reconciled to the thought of crossing the Channel and deviating from his scholarly habits in the name of the *entente*. . . . The acceptance was sent after the friend had declared that it *was* worth while.

Train and steamboat do not represent the ideal mode of progress to Anatole France. He prefers the automobile. One is independent, one keeps one's individuality, and the journey is touched with adventure if the beaten tracks are forsaken and bypaths explored. The poet and philosopher—for Anatole France is a delicate poet as well as a matchless prose-writer—has motored across Algeria and parts of Morocco in recent years, and has gone long trips across Europe in a car belonging to his publisher and friend, M. Calman Lévy. This worthy man could unfold a tale of tribulation were he to reveal the secrets of the prison-house—the weary waits for MS. from gifted pens. And one of the worst offenders is M. France himself, who lingers over the fabrication of a novel as if loth to part with his precious prose. Perhaps he realises, with a sort of feminine coquettishness, that one way to keep a friend is to make him a little anxious about you. It is woman's way to stimulate the laggard lover. The uncertainty of the mistress acts as fire to the lover's soul and gives warmth to his addresses.

Anatole France possesses the feminine characteristics of petulance and caprice. It was Meredith who said that the best of the sex had a touch of the woman in them. The foibles in his character include an impish delight in shocking the bourgeoisie. He advances extraordinary doctrines merely to show us how foolish ordinary principles are. He takes pleasure in tearing aside the veils of convention that we may gaze on the repellent features of reality. If he throws dynamite—and justifiably—at placid self-complacency, he commits an outrage with just as light a heart on honest conviction. But he is not as cynical as he seems ; his anarchy is often a pose. He writes obviously for the intellectuals — such as can understand and make allowances for the humour of genius. If he wars with society he has a heart for suffering, a sympathy with the poor and oppressed, a hatred of injustice, a flaming sword for social wrongs, which make us forget his strange inconsistencies and perversities, his dangerous doctrines, his corrosive anarchism, his subversive laughter. In reading his fascinating pages one feels there is good in laughing at pundits, in disturbing the gravity of unctuous people, even in challenging old beliefs that we may learn how to know the truth. A little ridicule is a dangerous thing, but it is principally dangerous to pure pretension. To know why one loves is perhaps a reason for loving

the more, and there is health in laughter, even in the cruel laughter of the gods.

The master's scepticism and spirit of mockery at things that are the fetish of mankind spring from the eighteenth century. It is the spirit of that brilliant epoch when the greatest wits and thinkers lived and when French civilisation reached its pre-eminence. The greatest crime was to be boring : life was made for badinage, for persiflage, for all the light and pleasurable things which enable us like butterflies to flutter through the world. Anatole France has imbibed that spirit from his grandmother, who was born in the century and partook of its character. She was a charming old pagan, who laughed at his mother for her piety and church practices. "Grandmama was frivolous, grandmama had an easy moral system. She had no more piety than a bird. You should see the little round eye she made when, on Sundays, my mother and I set out for church."

The spirit of this eighteenth century easily insinuated itself into the mind of the young man little inclined to asceticism and eager to feel and to enjoy. More subtle than strong, he was naturally more speculative than creative. So much of his writing is the musing of a pagan mystic. Renan's *Vie de Jésus* had an undoubted influence upon him, as well as Taine's *History of English Literature*; both appeared at the time

when France was leaving the Collège Stanislas. He has pleasant memories of his schooldays, even though the atmosphere was clerical, as it is to-day. He was not a brilliant pupil and carried off no particular prize. He would not have supported school discipline but for the return, each evening, to the parental roof-tree, for constraint was always disagreeable to his wilful and rather spoilt character. As a boy he was dreamy, a little effeminate and refractory. For that reason he would have made but an indifferent soldier.

When the war of 1870 broke out he was shut up as a Reservist in a fortress, but that did not affect his love of books ; his taste was as strong as ever. He was still reading Virgil and enjoying him with shells flying over his head. In his love for the classics he has not changed. He is the same enthusiast who conned some delicious old Roman poet under the gas lamp on his way home from school or in front of the cheerful glow of the chestnut-seller's brazier.

France attached himself firmly to the eighteenth century. This amiable and adorable period, as he calls it, enchanted him with its art, its liberty, and vitality. The eighteenth century loved life largely, he says. He finds it infinitely more human and agreeable than the Middle Ages, with its barbarities and austerities and its fanatical contempt of women. No doubt, also, an affection for the period came from contact with the world

— a very literary and learned world — which frequented his father's book-shop on the quays, for the Père France—his real name was Noël Thibaud—was a bookseller on the Quai Malaquais, and the future writer was born and bred in an atmosphere of books. I think one feels that in reading his incomparable prose. His portraits have the look of old engravings and often give you a feeling of remoteness. They belong to the bookish world ; they are the outcome of a rather cool and contemptuous view of life, a distant contemplation of poor humanity. To his father's shop came many of the leading talkers of the day, and many were the topics discussed, sometimes in a tone of flippancy and a lack of respect for established things. These were signs, perhaps, of the approaching storm—symbols of disruption.

Though a strong Socialist, Anatole France is no revolutionary. This is clear from his wonderful book, *Les Dieux ont soif*, in which Revolutionary times are pictured with surpassing power. Though he draws with masterly hand the figures of revolutionaries, you feel that he is not really in sympathy with the misguided zealots and unconscious monsters whom he paints. His own manner of destruction is so much more refined than a vulgar cutting off of heads. Had he to dispatch a victim he would choose, I feel sure, a slow and undiscoverable poison,

Those who are unaffected by his subversive doctrines may yet feel displeasure by his habit of digression. Contributing as it does to the wayward charm of his essays, it is a little disconcerting to those who would follow the subject he has set out to discuss. He indulges in personal reminiscence, bits from his profound reading, moral and philosophical reflection—he touches on everything except the book which he is presumably reviewing. But then he tells us that his ideal reviewer is a cheerful and well-informed companion ; and there is much in the idea. So many reviewers are not cheerful ; but there is excuse for their pessimism, alas !

“Comme il sait beaucoup et qu'il comprend encore plus qu'il ne sait, il a ce don merveilleux d'elucider parfaitement son sujet en parlant d'autre chose.” This is Jules Lemaitre's description of his work and methods, and it is perfect. You get an excellent example of it in his causeries on literature and Paris life which he contributed to the *Temps*. If one feels an enjoyment infinitely renewed in following this literary Puck round the world, one is conscious, none the less, of a certain fatigue at the end of a breathless excursion. Had he kept to the subject in hand many charming pages would have been lost ; he follows where fancy leads. Before the Society of Foreign Journalists in London, Anatole France was good

enough to say that journalism has aided him in the art of expression, and that practice of the *métier* brought two things: ease in writing, and simplicity. It was a graceful tribute to the humbler branch of letters.

Those pages in the *Temps* are ever fresh; it is a joy to re-read them at this distance of time; how spontaneous they seem, how erudite and yet how far removed from that priggish and pragmatic spirit so often affected by the English critic. The writer has become the travelling companion, the charming and discursive guide who rambles with you through twilight woods, where the ground is starred by some white flower, symbol of a lost romance, and scented space is filled with the soft voluptuous trills of the nightingale. He has been compared with Sainte-Beuve for his literary manner. A critic declares that the two writers possess the same nicety of meaning, the same harmony of equilibrium, the same discreet elegance, ornate simplicity, and taste for "gentle slopes." Both have been reared in the classics.

Racine and Lafontaine represent to France an æsthetic ideal. He is of the school of Voltaire, of Diderot, and of their smaller contemporaries. He seems to accept everything of the eighteenth century except Rousseau, and he does not like him because he was the father of Romanticism and is responsible for the sentimentality which dominated

literature for half a century, and which offends his clear and measured classicism. Of the Romantic poets he takes most pleasure in de Musset, Lamartine, and de Vigny. He is hard on Victor Hugo. "He lives on sounds and colours, and has made the world drunk with them." And again: "His blood boils with so much noise in his head that his ears cannot perceive, amidst so much mental disturbance, the sounds of the past." His attachment to Parnassians springs from his feeling that, in the reaction from Romanticism, the new school has aided in the cult of form. On the other hand, he treats without indulgence the Naturalists and Decadents, with the exception of Maupassant. He has written severe criticism of Zola; but Renan he regards as a demi-god.

I have spoken already of his Socialism. It seems to take the form, sometimes, of a combative anti-militarism. He was of those who objected most strongly to the Three Years' Law which prolonged military service in France, and, in a famous poster, which fluttered on all the walls, he asked pity for the Apache sent to fight the Moor against his will. Yet Anatole France is not an enemy of the profession of arms; he has written an eulogy of it, declaring that it is the real school of discipline and the nursery of civic virtues. "The camp was the early city; the warriors made civilisation possible by assuring public safety. In the city

they introduced the spirit of devotion, of sacrifice, and obedience to laws. . . . The soldier is necessary, and of all social fatalities is the most constant and the most imperious." But he himself has no liking for the *métier*, though in a patriotic mood he volunteered for service in 1914. The spirit was unquenchable, even if the body could not keep pace. In another passage, which contrasts so oddly with the first, he speaks of soldiering as having inspired him with disgust and fright by the character of servitude, false glory, and cruelty attached to it. "Men must be thoroughly absurd to attribute more glory to the actions of a soldier than to the work of a labourer." France is more disconcerting in his inconsistencies than most thinkers of the day. Elsewhere he says that, though civil war is odious, it is not as inept as foreign war, for citizens who fight among themselves have more chance of knowing why they fight.

In reality, his opinions have been vastly changed by the Dreyfus case. Just as, in a rough way, French history seems to be divided into two parts —before the Revolution and after—so M. France's ideas have been coloured by that immense social upheaval which accompanied the conviction of the Jewish officer for treason. Before that time he seems to have held opinions little in advance of the ordinary Frenchman. But he was profoundly

shocked by the prejudice and false swearing which prevailed during the case, and by the spectre of Clericalism that cast its shadow over Justice. His own conscience was outraged by an unjust decision, or at least a decision that was not supported by legal proofs, and he became resolutely hostile to those who had taken a prominent part in securing the conviction of the officer, acting, as I believe they did in many cases, from a sincere conviction. Anatole France's quarrel with the Academy dates from that period. Since then he has never sat among the Immortals, because he holds that it is a political clan with reactionary tendencies and not a high impartial Areopagus. This explains the discrepancies in France's opinions, which are sufficiently startling if one has no key to the mystery. I think, also, that, like many men of extreme intellectuality, he is frightened of imprisoning himself in his theories. He leaves a loophole for revised opinions. The complex mind is perpetually haunted by the thought that there must be two sides to every question. France seems to take account of both in a way which is singularly confusing.

The rare classic quality of his work comes from contact with the master-minds of the world. He is a stylist and purist of the first water, unsurpassed in his ability to express the most delicate shades of meaning and to distil an aroma from his words.

This quality is dangerous when used in a subversive sense or in a sense purely sensual. In the form of fiction he gives rein, sometimes, to voluptuousness and anarchy. This sensuality can have little in common with the æsthetè who, in the long avenues of Versailles, conjures up the most wondrous images of the past, and evolves from the delicate tapestry of his mind entrancing pictures of the quiet domestic life of France. Even the commonest banalities are bedecked with learning and the charm of a perfect style. One marvels at the range and variety of his literary output, surely unequalled by any other prose-writer. It includes the refined and delicate *Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard*, which lays bare the soul of an *érudit*; the passionate *Lys Rouge*, the only one of his books which deals with amatory experience with absolute directness; *Thaïs*, marvellous in its evocation of the sensuousness of the Orient; and then his pungent criticism of the Dreyfus case under the ironical title of *L'Ile des Pengouins*. His story, too, of Revolutionary times, *Les Dieux ont soif*, is not only one of his latest, but also one of his best books. It is brilliantly descriptive of this amazing period. To him also is due *Monsieur Bergeret*, one of the most charming documents of the time. *La revolte des Anges* is typical of the man, and is the soul of satire, and disquieting at times. Angels in the guise of men descend

upon the earth and adopt the most earthly amusements. They frolic in Montmartre, savagely and coarsely—a strange conception—but the narrator's style is as polished and as imperturbable as ever.

It is in the short story that M. Anatole France most clearly shows his supreme gift. In this literary form his defects become less apparent; his digressions form a legitimate relief to the thread of the story. Less apparent, also, in a more or less concise narrative, is the poverty of his invention. One is charmed and thrilled by the beauty of the language; one forgets the want of originality. It is the manner of the telling which gives the secret pleasure and raises this author to the highest pinnacle of art. His Socialism has not led him to sociability, and few can count the superb artist as a friend. The interviewer, I suspect, rarely gets beyond the hall in that wonderful, half-ecclesiastical house in the Villa Said of the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, or catches more than a glimpse of the master in his characteristic dressing-gown, his head crowned by a calotte. He looks like some distinguished Churchman of the Middle Ages, though no Church of earth would sanction all his writings. But, in a final estimate of the man, we must consider him, I think, as of the élite, writing for the élite, who should not be taken *au pied de la lettre*. In any case he is an artist and a patriot—a link between the Old France and the New.

## HENRI BERGSON

IT is difficult to explain why Bergson has such a vogue, why such a large audience is attracted by his lectures at the Collège de France, for he has done nothing to promote such popularity. But the fact remains, that of all the professors who lecture in this venerable institution, none has the drawing power of this master of modern philosophy. In person he is rather extraordinary looking : a large head on a frail body, and pale, æsthetic features ; but, when he lectures, people forget that, they forget the physical envelope of the man under the charm of his wonderful words. It is true that he has no tricks of speech, that he spurns fictitious aids to oratory, and glories in a clear exposition of his subject. And yet, as was said of Plato, bees hover upon his lips to drink the honey of his words, for he has the gift of idealising his subject, and of rendering it extraordinarily alluring. I think that is the reason for his remarkable success. He poetises philosophy, and has such a wealth of imagery and such apt allusions that his hearers are carried away in spite of themselves.

Bergson stands for revolt against the German



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materialism, which formerly swayed some of the great minds of France. He has broken with a harsh and despairing philosophy and has adopted a new and uplifting theory. Bergson's chief inspiration seems to have been Descartes and Kant. It would take more time than I propose to give to show the exact relation of the philosophy of Bergson with that either of the French or the German thinker. But it is clear enough that there is much in common between Kant and Bergson ; Kant was to a great extent the forerunner of Pragmatism, and Bergsonianism is largely Pragmatism.

It is a helpful and inspiring philosophy, first, because it insists on the free will of man ; and secondly, because it is eminently spiritualist in its conception. The great point which differentiates Bergson from all other teachers of the present day is his insistence on "the value of intuition as completing pure reason." He tells us that in the animal world the subconscious, instinctive, or intuitive actions have something eternal, almost Divine, about them. The instinct of the bird building its nest, of the beaver constructing its dam, the thousand instances of an ingenious system of defence or attack amongst the lower forms of life, are to Bergson so many symbols of a master mind, so many signs of a Divine intervention. He says that the intellect, so skilful in dealing with matter, is awkward the moment it touches life and spirit,

and he has some wonderful chapters in *Matter and Memory*, *Life*, and some of his other books on the development of intellect on the one hand and intuition on the other, which form a chain of argument eloquent and suggestive.

Bergson's great contention is that the soul and psychic part of the man is immaterial and cannot be explained by what one might term his material nature. The purely mental faculties cannot explain the psychic qualities of a man. A pebble carried upon a wave to the shore offers no explanation of its origin or destiny. It does not bear on its rounded, polished form any image of the wave which has projected it to the beach. Much the same image can be employed in the human world. The intellect of man, says Bergson, has been gradually shaped by an adaptation of mind to matter. How do you expect this intellect to grasp the spirit which is behind it, and which is cast in a mould entirely different from the mould of matter? Is not intuition, analogous though superior to instinct, a surer guide to the real nature of spiritual phenomena than the reasoning faculties which have emerged in a comparatively late period of our development? "The intelligence can only understand the material, the general laws which govern the relationship of bodies. The psychic world is beyond its ken because phenomena must appear as objects in space, whereas they are

immaterial." Intelligence and science are unable to penetrate this world. But intuition is there to help us. Bergson connects this intuition with instinct. By intuition we attain to the absolute in the order of life, as by the senses and by science we attain to the absolute in the order of matter. Thus Bergson makes appeal to our intuition to prove those problems which, if not beyond our comprehension, are at least outside the range of ascertainable fact.

It seems probable that Bergson is responsible to a great extent for the change observable in the attitude of the intellectual classes towards the Church. The number of young University men and students of the schools of France who now exhibit a sympathy with religion is remarkable, and points to a renaissance of the Faith. How far Bergson has contributed to this re-birth of belief it would be idle to attempt to prove; but I think it may be said that his lofty character and teaching have had a great deal to do with those comforting signs of a revivified moral sensibility which have given such pleasure to the friends of France. None the less, this has not prevented the Church of Rome from placing M. Bergson's books upon the Index. The three volumes incriminated are the *Immediate Problems of the Conscience*, *Matter and Memory*, and *Creative Evolution*. It is not for me to attempt to explain the reasons which

prompted the decision of the Congregation of the Index, or to prove that this condemnation is part of a general plan, on the part of contemporary Catholicism, to exterminate Modernism, but we have authority for saying that the books were considered more dangerous to the Faithful because of their subtlety and suavity and the perfume of their language.

The Church probably associates itself with those critics who declare that Bergson has disregarded the true nature and function of intelligence in order to overthrow it, and has sought to replace intelligence by imagination under the name of intuition. This Bergsonian intuition, according to M. Maritain, a young savant who has taken the philosopher to task for many of his theories, is principally characterised by opposition to intellectual knowledge, and is, he declares, only inflated sensibility in which analogy and picturesque suggestion take the place of reason. "Metaphor, metaphor," exclaims M. Maritain, "why dost thou intervene so foolishly in grave philosophical discussions which ought to be as much taboo to thee as the mathematics thou abhorrest!" This distrust of human intelligence is an offence in the eyes of the Church—though I am aware that some Protestants would not have it so—and the Papacy has declared in a famous document its value and necessity. But this submission of the mind to a philosophic system would not have

entailed the consequences of a condemnation if M. Bergson had not adopted theses contrary to the Catholic dogma. Bergsonianism, in fact, leads inevitably to Modernism, and, for this reason, the philosopher has been banned by the spiritual power of Rome. None the less, I contend that the general effect of Bergson's philosophy has been for good, and if he leads some back to the Church, by a species of reaction, he has scarcely lessened his influence. But whether the sacred College accepts it or not, Modernism is the half-way house to many who cannot accept the formal creeds of Rome.

Bergson has not given us as yet a code of conduct, a rule for daily life ; but, undoubtedly, he is tending in that direction, and his next work will probably deal with this intimate side of "practical" philosophy.

As I have said in the opening sentences of this chapter, the modern philosopher has a great drawing power with the public. He has had to change the hour of his lectures from the fashionable five o'clock in the afternoon to the less agreeable hour of two, in an effort to lessen the embarrassing homage of his followers in Society. Society rustling in silks and satins disturbed the "serious" students, and something like a storm—in a philosophic teacup—arose ; but incidents of the sort are not sufficient to daunt the fair *Parisienne* who is set on gaining knowledge from the master.

She has borne uncomplainingly the change in hour, notwithstanding its inconvenience and the necessity for hurrying over lunch, just as she bore the martyrdom of an hour's lecture on political economy—a subject which she abominated and did not understand the least in the world—in order to be well placed to hear the golden words of her favourite lecturer. Women drive up to the Collège de France in beautiful limousines, and step daintily therefrom, to sit on hard stone steps (mitigated by the cushions which the footman brings) for half an hour before the doors of the lecture theatre are thrown open. Such homage is rare, even in brilliant Paris, where the most frivolous flirt a little with letters and philosophy.

Nor was it easy to foresee such success from the earlier years of Bergson. He professed philosophy in the Lycée Rollin and the Lycée Henri IV. before taking up his post in the Ecole Normale Supérieure ; but his earlier years were spent at Angers and at Clermont, in the depth of the French provinces, where perhaps, but for his book, *The Problems of the Conscience*, which he wrote at Clermont, as a theme for his Doctorate, he might have remained to this day. He hesitated a long time between science and letters and eventually chose letters, but not before he had distinguished himself in mathematics, by presenting, at a public examination, an entirely new solution of an old problem.

Some of his pupils have given us a picture of Bergson as a teacher in a Paris secondary school. Outwardly his appearance did not impress these irreverent young men. His head seemed to weigh down the body ; he looked worn and weary, and yet his discourse showed the alertness and freshness of his intellect. He strode to and fro with large steps, one hand behind his back ; he used to raise the other in lowering the head—a pathetic gesture suggestive of fatigue—but there was no lack of enthusiasm in his speech. At moments he would stand with legs apart, his blue eyes fixed on space, an inexpressible look upon his face as if absorbed in transcendental thoughts. His voice is expressive and flute-like. It rises with the argument and reaches its highest note at the end of a glowing peroration.

M. René Doumic, one of Bergson's pupils in those days, shows the philosopher in a characteristic light. The future professor of the Collège de France fought an oratorical duel one day with M. Jaurès, the Socialist leader, who at that time was also a teacher of philosophy. Jaurès was emphatic and aggressive and animated with an evident desire to win. The attitude of the other was in direct contrast. The light-haired, blue-eyed youth seemed no match for his burly antagonist ; but, presently, one discovered that he had drawn blood in his quiet and delicate style. A little later one

perceived that there was nothing left of the arguments of M. Jaurès; they had been demolished by his modest and almost unconscious victor.

Professor Bergson lives in the Villa Montmorency, at Passy. It is a pleasant, quiet house, retired from the world, and yet on the fringe of a busy quarter, accessible by underground and omnibus. As becomes a busy man, the philosopher flees the visitor who has come merely to waste his time and to enjoy the sensation of shaking hands with a celebrity. Bergson cares very little to talk about himself, and in this differs from some "great" men of to-day. His hours of reception are from eleven until lunch. You may find him surrounded by fellow-professors, by foreign students, attracted by his fame, and by present and former pupils. His conversation is just as charming and almost as informing as his lectures. He will discuss everything : art, music, literature, language—everything except politics. This refusal to talk about "burning" questions gives his conversation a certain aloofness ; he is in the century and yet not of it. When the unwary touch upon controversial matters he gives a little shrug of the shoulders or raises a deprecatory hand.

In the summer, Bergson betakes himself to Switzerland, where he has the advantage of mountain air and freedom from interruption. His house

is masked by a large hotel, but otherwise is satisfactorily placed; and in the cool, deep shade of pines on mountain-tops Bergson may give himself to his vast problems. Nothing, as I have said, is more striking than the high place he has given in his system to man's subconscious nature. Thus he has provided one of the great arguments for immortality. There is in the human breast an instinctive revolt against the extinction of the Ego, just as there is an instinctive appeal to a Superior Being. May it not be that instinctive eyes—the eyes of the inner consciousness—have seen visions denied the more positive instrument of the brain?

Another point in the philosophy of Bergson is his frank acceptance of science. Once a fact is scientifically established he admits no trifling with it. That he achieved distinction as a mathematician is also a sign of his accurate, clear brain, and accounts, perhaps, for his masterful handling of scientific data. At the same time it hardly accounts for those other qualities which have made him a constructive thinker of such outstanding popularity in intellectual England, France, and America. Bergson's origin is Russian, and there is little indeed of the clear Latin genius in his system and methods. His mysticism and half obscurity belong to Russia, to its grey landscape and stretches of pine-forest heights, rather than to the Sunny South. Some glory in the difficulty they experience

in comprehending him. To such there is beauty in semidarkness, in the shadow, the softening mists that surround the harsh outline of a theory, as if philosophy were an impressionist landscape and the philosopher had to interpose a veil of romance before the hard realities of his subject.

Mme Bergson is the professor's constant help-meet and associate. With intelligence and devotion she undertakes the task of answering his voluminous correspondence, and a great part of his time is absorbed in compiling answers to these communications, which come from the ends of the earth. Sometimes there is an accumulation of several hundreds of letters on his desk, all waiting replies—replies that cannot be dashed off in a moment but require reflection and study. Bergson is a tremendous worker. He has worked to develop his system ; he must work to maintain his position as one of the leaders of contemporary thought. His literary method is to put down his impressions as fast as possible, and then give a lengthened consideration to their final form. He has produced slowly ; it has taken him years to write his books—several years to each volume—but he still goes on placidly, serenely, exposing his ideas.

Bergson was born in 1859 at Paris. Being the son of a Russian father, he was received at the Ecole Normale Supérieure as a foreign student, but afterwards became a naturalised

Frenchman. He passed the *agrégation* in philosophy and became professor at the Collège Rollin. In between whiles he professed philosophy in the provinces and gained, as I have said, his *docteur ès lettres* with an essay on the "Problems of the Conscience." It was as professor of the Lycée Henri Quatre that he pronounced in 1895 a famous speech on "Common Sense and Classical Studies." Then he became lecturer at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in 1898, and two years later he succeeded M. Levèque as professor of philosophy in the Collège de France. His career has been rapid and brilliant. Though still comparatively young, he has exercised considerable influence on contemporary philosophy, thanks to his oral teaching and his books. In 1914 came a crowning incident of his life; he was elected to the Académie Française. Having in 1913 chosen M. Boutroux, his old master, this learned body fittingly elected the pupil in 1914. Boutroux lectured on Fichte and Hegel whilst Bergson was assiduously taking notes in the class, and before long Bergson himself was to have his own class.

I have said that the morning often finds him receiving his pupils and friends and listening to or exchanging impressions with them. In the old days, when he was a mere teacher of philosophy in a secondary school, he was accustomed to receive

his pupils in a small room. His shoulders were covered with a cape, which gave him the appearance of a lay capuchin ; there was an absence of pose, of the least pretension. Nor has he changed his manner with his change in fortune. The cape may be replaced by an overcoat if the weather is cold, for Bergson is a chilly mortal, notwithstanding the exhilaration of his philosophy, but he is still the same, simple and unaffected, the friend and counsellor of youth.

It may be well to re-state Bergson's reasoning on the intelligence and the instinct. According to him, the intelligence is not "philosophical"; it creates geometrists, land measurers, artisans ; it constructs the phonograph and petrol motor : its rôle is to fabricate tools. But the intelligence cannot explain anything of life, of which it is itself a product, and the conscience cannot be measured like a solid body.

We may now take leave of Bergson in his working room, littered with magazines and with reviews of all kinds. There is a six-legged table, at which he works, but everywhere are books and reading matter,—books in every language that deal with all manner of subjects—even with philosophy. Sometimes the visitor who pursues him to his lair is amusingly outwitted. Tourists came one day to the house and inquired of a man they found in the garden where his master was. The gardener, his

feet in sabots, and wearing a coarse old suit covered with a blue apron, replied that his *patron* had left the house early that morning and would not re-enter it before evening. With reluctance the visitors departed, and when the gate had clicked behind them the horticulturist lifted his broad straw hat, which completely shaded his face from the sun, and revealed the features of —Bergson. He had been tending his roses as a relaxation from philosophy.

This man's influence on the rising generation is so strong, so striking, so indisputable, so in accord with the new spirit of France, that I have every reason for including him in my gallery of great men.

## JEAN FINOT

JEAN FINOT is so obviously the optimist that it is difficult to believe that he was ever anything else. Yet, as a quite young man, lying on his back on the banks of the Vistula, he was filled with sad thoughts that often assail youth before arriving at what Goethe calls the age of optimism. To sensitive souls unfortified by experience, there is something frightening in life: in implacable old age and death, in the baffling secrets of the universe, the spectacle of human suffering and fatuity, the eternal round of labour, the consciousness that one gets nowhere because one moves perpetually in a circle. And these gloomy thoughts were deepened by the study of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer and other of the German philosophers, until the young man thought longingly of suicide. And then he made a discovery. He found that those who more actively preached the doctrine of death were secretly enjoying life, and evidently, by continuing to live, falsified their own conclusions or proved their cowardice. Did they not also prove that progress is not a vain word, since existence cannot logically be defended without it? These reflections pro-



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Finot

Jean Finot

JEAN FINOT.



duced so strong a reaction in young Finot that he ceased from that moment to be a pessimist and opened a new chapter in his life.

And yet it required courage to avow oneself an optimist in France at the time when Finot began to write. Books and articles in the home and foreign Press insisted on the national decay. Baudelaire, Zola, Guy de Maupassant had contributed to the impression that everything was rotten in the country. It was clear that every man was a monster, every woman his predestined victim. The *petit crevé*, the typical young man of the period, was the most hopeless of any and lacking utterly in all virile qualities. No wonder the nation seemed to be decomposing, and every one spoke of its approaching doom. The over-ripe pear was ready to fall from the branch. "Decadent France" was a common expression in England as across the Rhine.

Politics naturally reflected these depressing tendencies; there was never a time when they seemed so weak and ineffective. The navy, conducted by theorists more hurtful to it than was Nelson, was at its lowest point; the army was honeycombed with intrigue.

Finot began to write cheerful books which were as much remarked for their contrast in tone with other philosophers as for their intrinsic argument. Who was the man who dared to say that all

politicians were not corrupt in France? that hatred of England was not a necessary part of French policy, and was an absurdity, since the two nations completed one another and were not commercially competitive? And, proceeding from the general to the particular, he declared that the sum of individual happiness, as well as the span of human life, could be greatly increased. Happiness could be cultivated like flowers in a garden and life prolonged to a Biblical old age by an ordered scheme of existence. This was before Metchnikoff showed how one could live to a great age by eliminating poisons from the system.

Parisians learned with astonishment that this writer was not French, but a Pole who had adopted the French nationality and dared to tell them something about themselves that they professed to have forgotten. Instead of dwelling upon morbid phenomena, he roused in them the sense of life. The Dreyfus case had rent the country in twain and left a feeling of humiliation as well as smouldering animosities behind. Finot supplied the antidote in his interesting works. France was not dying, he declared, with unheard-of optimism, and people presently began to realise that it was as easy to be cheerful as gloomy.

Pessimism weeps, optimism works. There were other factors in the result, but M. Finot contributed powerfully to the renaissance. One proof of the

new spirit was the enthusiasm shown in aviation. France would never have flown, says M. Finot, had she continued to be pessimist. You cannot imagine a sad man soaring to the sun ; he would drop to earth. Like Emerson and others who have elevated optimism to a creed, Finot is accused of platitudes. But had he given his thoughts a melancholy turn, he would have been praised for his penetration. Weak health is fashionable in certain circles ; a strong pulse is sign of vulgarity. But these dyspeptics have not prevented a general acceptance of this comforting philosophy.

In South America, according to Jules Huret, Finot is as popular as Maeterlinck and Rostand. I know no more inspiring article of exportation. It is not merely his creed which appeals, but his manner of conceiving philosophy. He believes that it must come into touch with real life, that it cannot be a mere affair of the study and the laboratory. Where, for instance, is mediaeval and cloistered philosophy ? whereas the philosophy of the Greeks lives because it is essentially human.

I began with Finot lying on the banks of the Vistula. His patronym was Finkelhaus, but, when he became French, he became Finot—his other name—and as Finot he is known throughout the civilised world. His books instil confidence and courage ; they put iron into the blood. Finot began training early for his career. His father

told him to mount a horse, and that is how he learned to ride. His three governesses taught him as many languages; to the living tongues were added Greek and Latin. Then came lycée days and days at Warsaw University, which he left early, for his precocious intellect was hurrying him on to other destinies.

A year or two was spent in travelling, in visiting the capitals of Europe, and in meeting representative men, with whom he conversed on questions of the day. And then came Paris. As a quite young man he found amusement and refreshment in its streets, its museums, and its theatres. Later, when he went to reside there, he completed his education by following the lectures of the Collège de France. Having adopted France as his country, principally because his education and his sympathies, derived from a French grandmother, were in tune with Latin civilisation, his real literary career began. He wrote in French and then in English for *Galignani's*—the old journal which flourished in Thackeray's day and existed at Waterloo. Then he became editor of the *Cri de Paris*, which is the *Truth* of Paris. Its witty pages contain enough libels to keep a bench of judges engaged; but we are in France, not in England, and great liberty of language is allowed. A public man is delivered bodily to the pamphleteer. But the *Cri* then, as now, refrained from

serious scandal, and its gaiety and humour rendered tolerable its disrespect.

There followed more formal journalism in the *Revue des Revues*, as it then was. W. T. Stead and Finot were great friends, and the original object of the French publication was to follow the English *Review of Reviews* as closely as possible. Though the Channel separated the two editors, it did not prevent an exchange of visits. Stead came to Paris to lunch and dine with his French confrère, and took the train back to London in the evening. Finot returned the call by passing a day at Wimbledon or perhaps in Stead's office in the Strand.

About this time, Mr. Hearst, the American newspaper proprietor, proposed to start an international organ with editions in the great capitals. Stead was to be the English editor and Finot the French one. The scheme only broke down because Hearst discovered that there would be three strong minds conducting the paper instead of one--his own.

Finot has always refused to subordinate his pen to another's views. He acts as if he had millions, whereas his chief riches are in his ideas. He writes what he likes to write.

His summer residence at Andilly in the forest of Montmorency gives him the solitude he needs for the writing of books, and yet he is sufficiently near to Paris to attend constantly his office in the Rue

Jacob. He allows nothing to disturb the hours given to writing, which begin at 6 a.m. in the summer and finish at midday. Into those six hours he crowds an immensity of labour. He sits for a long time, his head in his hand, thinking out the best formulæ for his reflections. In his study, situated in an annexe of the building, he is free from interruptions, and even an invitation from the Elysée to lunch would not reach him.

He is jealous of these hours, and always would rather pay than sacrifice precious moments to the bore. Time, he feels, is more than money, since you can replace the latter. Method and persistence are the two secrets of his output, which is slow and restricted but regular. In this he follows Zola, who wrote only 600 words a day, whatever his mood, but he wrote them every day, and in consequence was able to produce two long novels a year. "Slow and sure" is as important a maxim in literature as in most other things.

A large circulation rewarded Finot's work on the *Revue*, as its name now is; but when he first acquired it only twenty-three copies an issue were sold. Besides being editor and staff, he was the distributor as well! It would take him a long time now to travel round his large constituency. The success of the Review has enabled him to devote more and more time to books. His latest, *Progress and Happiness (Progrès et Bonheur)*, is also one

of his best. Therein he argues the question whether we have progressed, and whether we can cultivate happiness. He replies to both in the affirmative. Of course we have progressed, and he cites a thousand instances of it, and, of course, we can cultivate happiness and reach that serenity of soul necessary to its maintenance. Serenity results from lofty pleasures and sensations. The more profound the inner life, and the loftier the motives which direct it, the more intense is the happiness. As that state of mind belongs to moral pleasures, we must know how to create them. One of the aids to happiness is labour, which it is a fallacy to suppose was created for our punishment ; it has, on the contrary, something divine in it.

Happiness must be taught as we teach grammar or any other science. Finot was asked by French teachers to devise a course on happiness for French schools. It gratified him to comply. He was touched also by a letter which he received from negroes in the Southern States of America, who thanked him, much to his astonishment, for having proved that there were no more negroes ! What he really tried to prove in *Préjugé des Races* was not that, but racial equality, insisting also on the brilliant future reserved to all who, without distinction of colour, show themselves worthy and energetic. These theories have gained him great popularity with the coloured races. But his

American correspondents had imitated certain white folk in jumping to conclusions.

If he was in advance of his time in dealing with the negro question, he was also a "little previous" in preaching the *entente* between England and France? His articles in favour of a *rapprochement*, in the name of European civilisation, were noted appreciatively by the *Times*, but the Quai d'Orsay objected that they were embarrassing to French diplomacy abroad and were likely to displease Russia. This was, of course, long before the days of official friendship.

Nor was this the only occasion on which Finot played an international rôle, or when his writings were challenged by a government. He attacked Russian finance and particularly the project to launch a new loan for £40,000,000 in France to continue the war with Japan. "How to save our Milliards" was the title of an article which attracted great attention and provoked a debate in the Chamber. The Russian Government was so moved by it that the Finance Minister of the day, M. Kokovtzow, in receiving a deputation of French parliamentarians, headed by the Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, alluded to it and took the writer personally to task for having defeated the loan. It was remarkable that Finot was able to do this, after signatures had been exchanged between the Russian Minister and three of the

principal French banks. M. Rovier, then Premier and Minister of Finance, asked M. Finot to discontinue his campaign. The journalist acceded, but on the understanding that the loan was not made. This condition was accepted. In writing of the incident in *La Revue*, M. Finot declared that if it was true that he had prevented the conclusion of the loan, Russia ought to erect to him the highest monument ever accorded to a writer, for having saved her £40,000,000 and the lives of 200,000 soldiers of to-morrow. The monument, indeed, exists in the esteem with which Jean Finot is held. The incident itself proves the force of a just cause honestly advanced.

Small in size, alert and energetic in his gestures, Jean Finot looks like a friendly little gnome who has come upon the earth to minister to mankind.

## HÉLÈNE MIROPOLSKY

PORIA in the play and Portia in real life, you feel, would be utterly different. She of the play, surely, is tall and slender, with golden lustrous hair, a pallid face, nobly expressive, half Spanish and Italian in its character, and a voice silvery and seductive. But she in real life, a real *avocate*, must be plain, with spectacles on her nose and strange, strange clothes ; her hair would be short, like her skirts and her temper. Mlle Miropolsky (or Mme Gaston Strauss, as her name is now) is the Portia of Shakespeare's imagining—save that her hair is dark. She is a pretty woman, with soft eyes, taking manners, and an attractive voice. You marvel at the learning she displays, for it is a little disconcerting to be lectured on law by a young woman of twenty-six who has nothing of the blue-stocking about her. If her forehead puckers now and again with a little frown of reflection, the mouth continues to smile. Nor does the *avocate* disdain face-powder or any other fallals of the feminine. Her shoulders, this early afternoon, are covered with a muslin wrapper which rests, filmy as a cloud, upon the dark fabric



MLLE. MIROPOLSKY.



of the dress. You feel she would be interested in tea and tango, if it were not hopelessly old-fashioned to talk of such things. Yet, clearly, she has little time for social diversions. I gather that the work comes in rushes : a busy fortnight succeeded by a calm one. But the evenings are hers ; she can attend receptions, concerts, theatres, even if she cannot dissipate the afternoon in Bridge and gossip.

How interesting she is when she talks in her "amusing" little drawing-room, furnished in the modern English style, of personal experiences at the Bar—as indeed are most people when they discuss their own affairs. What courage this young girl required to pioneer in the unknown field of the law, to inscribe herself at the Ecole de Droit, and then, in the face of professional sneers, conduct her first case in Court. And how brave to interview personally her clients in prison, for the advocate in France has no go-between, as in England, and feels that since he takes the prisoner's money he must at least make his personal acquaintance.

Maître Miropolsky's first difficulty was to overcome the opposition of her father. He thought that medicine should be her *métier*, since it was his, and not the law ; her mother thought so too. She, also, was a doctor of large practice, until compelled by ill-health to relinquish it. This

enforced retirement from a beloved profession saddened her last years.

There is something tenderly romantic in the courtship of M. and Mme Miropolsky. He was a student at Kief University under suspicion for his opinions. Despairing of reform in Russia—it was before the Duma—he settled in Paris and began to study at the Ecole de Médecine. His future wife was a member of the Polish aristocracy and much given to good works, nursing her neighbours when they were ill and caring for the poor. She, likewise, resolved to study medicine, and came to Paris for the purpose. The two met in class-rooms on the Left Bank, discussed professional subjects together, and fell in love. Side by side, they followed their classes and passed their examinations, and, on the very day when Dr. Miropolsky was licensed to practise upon mankind, his prospective bride also received her qualifying diploma.

It was natural, since medicine had meant so much to them, that they should feel a little disappointed at Hélène's choice of another profession. To her, the attraction lay in what Balzac calls "the spectacle of the human comedy." It is true that one sees this, to some extent, in the consulting-room of a doctor, but not in the varied form of a Law Court, where the maladies are moral phenomena and remedies are applied with an iron hand.

Mlle Miropolsky studied in this practical school, familiarising herself with its atmosphere.

But before she had the right to wear the black robe and biretta, which become her so wonderfully, she had to obtain her qualification. Study was never any difficulty to her; she delights in problems of the mind. She can clothe her thoughts, too, in graceful and picturesque language. At the College of Sévigné she studied for her *baccalaureat*. The girl-bachelor was a *rara avis* a decade ago. There were eight or ten candidates, however, in the class, absorbing the essentials of Greek and Latin, for they were then the only posterns to the educational fortress. Since that time three or four gates have been opened : science or a living language may be combined with one of the classics ; the dead tongues may be eliminated and modern subjects substituted. But, ten years ago, there was no escape from a first-hand acquaintance with the classics. The brilliant young girl lent her enthusiasm and her keen receptive brain to the task of acquiring the Humanities, sufficient to carry her into the School. She talks of her girl comrades of that time. All were distinguished, but some in unexpected ways. Two became singers at the Opéra Comique ; another, with graver views, no doubt, passed through the solemn portals of the Normal School ; others became chemists and doctors.

After the Lycée and the Law School came the

excitement of practice in the Courts. Her first case was that of a German woman, who had been caught shoplifting in a great emporium. Maître Miropolsky, handsome in robe and toque, which sat jauntily on her black tresses, observed sweetly to the magistrate: "Surely you would not be mean enough to condemn my first client." The occupant of the Bench was startled, even a little scandalised. . . . Such arguments were not used in his Court. He sent the accused to prison and refused her the benefit of the First Offenders' Act. The young counsel, in her chagrin, did not realise that the *loi de sursis* is not applied to foreigners whose antecedents are unknown.

It was not without a certain peril that Maître Miropolsky pursued her profession in the criminal branch. There were clients to see in prison, and this of itself is rather an ordeal. At Saint Lazare women prisoners do not see their lawyers alone. Counsel and clients meet in a large parlour with a long table between them. They discuss the case, but confidences are dangerous when neighbours overhear, and truth suffers in consequence. But in men's prisons the opportunity for private conversation is adequate and even a little excessive. The advocate is shut up in a small cell with the man in whose fate he is interested, and the warder, by way of precaution, locks the door. Even at a respectful distance a prisoner, unshaven and unshorn,

is a sinister being ; in close proximity he becomes terrifying. True, there is the bell to summon the gaoler, but that official may be far away, and time must elapse before the door can be opened—in any case, the experience is trying to feminine nerves.

Mlle Miropolsky had one client who was accused of wounding a policeman. He was of the ordinary Apache type, and in describing the method of his attack, he flung himself upon the ground to show how 'it was done. Such a demonstration in a narrow cell had all the glow of realism.

On another occasion a man who asked her aid was known to be a queer fellow, and certainly looked it. The warder made a concession to his reputation by only pretending to lock the door and by remaining within call. Happily, nothing untoward occurred, but, three or four days afterwards, the prisoner was removed to an asylum as a raving lunatic.

What is the effect of this contact with crime on a woman's nature ? Does it harden her, rendering her pessimistic and cynical ? No, says Maître Miropolsky, but it does destroy illusions and forces one to become practical—and philosophical. The lawyer realises that one must make allowances. Human nature is weak. Perversity is often a vain word to express weakness. It would be truer to say that there are weak and strong natures

than that there are naturally corrupt ones. And when the genesis of an act is revealed, *there* often is the explanation. Another conclusion is that none is so abandoned as to be entirely insensible to good. The practice of the pleader makes him not a theorist in human nature but a profound psychologist who has looked into the very souls of men.

Maître Miropolsky began her career, like other counsel, by taking up the poorer cases, to which a lawyer is allotted by the Court. She pleaded in the Correctional Court, where the penalty is simple prison or a fine, and she pleaded in the Assize Court, where the punishment is solitary confinement or the penal settlements. The fact of having to address judicial wisdom did not disturb her even at the very outset; it was the feeling of responsibility that weighed upon her—the feeling that, in some measure, the fate of the prisoner was upon her shoulders.

Naturally, she pleads more often for her own sex than for the other. She possesses the advantage of entering into women's feelings and of understanding more readily their motives. Her own emotions and instincts enable her to interpret those of her clients. She feels that men are often hard upon women in *crimes passionnels*. They make more allowance for their own sex. This would be remedied by employing women on juries,

because a woman, says Mlle Miropolsky, joins to her practical sense the sense of sympathy and justice. For this reason she thinks that there should be mixed juries in all cases.

A woman can better explain the feelings of a wife and mother; but the sterner sex is better qualified perhaps to plead in complicated cases involving figures. But Maître Miropolsky is not quite sure about it. "You see," she says, with reflective finger upon her brow, "a man does not plead such cases until he has had years of practice, and, of course, we women have not yet gained that experience."

Her first case at the Assizes was that of a mother accused of infanticide, and, to her great joy, the prisoner was acquitted. Another case was of grievous bodily harm. A rejected mistress had revenged herself by pouring petroleum upon her lover and then setting fire to him. Happily, he had rolled himself in blankets and so escaped serious injury; the aggressor was sentenced to four months' imprisonment. In her first years at the Bar, Maître Miropolsky took up many children's cases. They attract her very much, though they have the disadvantage of absorbing a great deal of time, for counsel has to arrange for the future of the children during the disciplinary period. The establishment of Children's Courts is a new phase in French procedure which promises a great

success. A wise provision excludes from the Courts those who have no business there, and Mlle Miropolsky considers that it will prevent much contamination amongst the young.

The young woman lawyer is increasingly successful, and has certainly one of the most lucrative practices of her sex at the Bar. She was the sixth woman barrister to be admitted, but some of the others have now abandoned the more active side of the profession. Actually the first to be inscribed, after a big fight in 1900, was Mlle Chauvin, sister of a deputy. The second was Mme Petit, wife of a nephew of M. Delcassé; another was Mme Benezech, a Polish lady; and another, Mlle Maille. With the exception of the last-named, none of this group now practises; Mlle Chauvin conducts a law class in a girls' lycée. Since Mlle Miropolsky's *début*, thirty *avocates* have been inscribed, and some dozen women are more or less actively engaged at the Palais de Justice.

Divorces provide Mlle Miropolsky with most of her work nowadays. Generally she pleads for the women, but sometimes she appears for the other side. Women, she feels, have a special competence in these cases, not merely because they can present the woman's point of view, but because they can deal with authority in matters of women's alimony and the care of children. Maître Miropolsky has written a book on divorce in which she urges that

incompatibility of temperament should be a ground for dissolution of the bond. She feels that this would do away with the comedy of establishing unfaithfulness *in flagrante delicto*. Such scenes, which have so often inspired the French playwright, are frequently the fruit, in real life, of the most unmitigated collusion. Her arguments, however, are principally intended for foreign consumption—for Italy, where Church law prevails and where the breaking of the tie blessed by the priest carries with it social consequences scarcely known now in Republican France.

By a curious irony her inscription both at the Law School and at the Bar had to receive the sanction of her father, for she was under age. Such disability is one of the vestiges of Roman tutelage, which still oppresses the French woman in the twentieth century. To strike off these chains—reimposed by Napoleon, whose opinions of woman are well-known—is one of the aims of Mlle Miropolsky. But her propaganda has taken a social and elegant form, removed from the crude violence of the Suffragette. She is not insensible to the value of the vote, but, she says, "there are other things." And she lectures on those other things before gatherings of society and middle-class women, convened by Mme Marguerite Durand, the famous editor of the now defunct *Fronde*. In these *thèses-conférences* — a particularly Parisian

institution — she tells her sisters what their rights are and that the price of ignorance is disaster. Can any affect not to know what the law requires of them? what powers their husbands possess? how they can safeguard legally their position, moral and material? The vote is one thing, their common rights another. Most women in France are supremely indifferent about the suffrage, with a certain disdain for politics, but none, with the practical spirit of the race, could treat lightly the things that are given to them by the law—even that niggardly law of which so many justly complain.

One cannot do better than take a few sentences from one of the addresses of Mlle Miropolsky on the meaning of feminism.

“The right kind of feminism ought not to frighten any one; it is really not such a strange and unreasonable Utopia. It appeals to all the world, to all women without distinction of class or profession. There is no one who can pretend to be utterly indifferent to these matters.

“There is so much desire for personal glory, and so many interests involved in the feminist question that the public must have difficulty in forming a clear notion of our ideas. A suffragette stops the King’s horse at the Derby—a feminist exploit! Another suffragette deposits a bomb, which is generally harmless, in a post office or uninhabited

villa—a feminist exploit ! A woman who disdains marriage and proclaims the beauties of the *union libre* is—a feminist !

"But you will not read, or very rarely, that a law (the Search for Paternity) which puts an end to the most crying injustice, permitting a father to abandon mother and child to a miserable destiny, is a feminist law, a work in which feminists, men and women, have collaborated. Neither will you read, in those excellent papers, which relate with complacency the least incident of the Suffragette, that another law, regulating the work of women with child, has emerged from the deliberation of our congresses and assemblies."

In the same *conférence* Mme Miropolsky said that the practice of her profession had revealed to her what was vital and essential in feminism. She had come to the conclusion that ignorance, blind confidence, and the indifference of women to their rights was at the back of much moral and material disaster. If women knew better the law—man's law—often so cruel and partial, they would all be feminists. . . .

"You will remember, certainly, the case of a young woman who, in conversation with her lawyer, learned that she was divorced. She simply supposed that her husband was absent for a few weeks, whereas he was on the point of remarrying. . . . The fault is the law's, in keeping women

at arm's length from affairs and the simplest principles of jurisprudence."

Sometimes Mlle Miropolsky lectures in a lighter vein—to the great surprise, no doubt, of those who think that the lawyer should be always grave. "A quoi ne rêvent plus les jeunes filles d'aujourd'hui" has nothing, of course, to do with jurisprudence; it is the amusing title of one of her *causeries* at the Théâtre Michel, Paris. But has the young woman of to-day much changed? I ask her. Does she no longer dream of the romantic young man, or simply of winning fame in some career? No, no, says Maître Miropolsky, she has not changed: *au fond* her ideal remains the same. She is looking for Prince Charming, but he must be of nobler type, and, moreover, her ideas of matrimony do not exclude those of economic independence; she may still wish to create her own career.

Mlle Miropolsky has lectured on several occasions at the Marble Arch Institute in London, and one of the most successful was on "Types at the Palais de Justice," in which she gave witty and agreeable pictures of judges, counsel, and witnesses at the Paris Law Courts.

Does a lawyer's training warp his regard for truth? Can he urge the acquittal of a man whom he knows to be guilty? Mlle Miropolsky did not entirely settle this question of ethics, but she said that, in a large number of cases, prisoners

left a doubt of their guilt or innocence in the minds of their counsel. They recognised that the best arm for their defence was their representative's belief in their innocence. "Je suis innocent, Maître," they say. Very rarely can they be got to admit the crime for which they are to be tried, and they continue to proclaim the candour of their lives—against all evidence to the contrary.

To feel one is of service to humanity is one of the consolations of the Bar, and it is impossible to know this young and charming *maître* without realising that she has found her real vocation — employment for her intellect and woman's sensibility. Nor has the Forum extinguished the hearth, for she has found domestic happiness as well, her husband being a young and rising lawyer.

## MARCEL DELANNEY

THE Prefect of the Seine is one of the sovereigns of Paris—the greatest, perhaps, since he represents the central Government. In appearance and manners he is just what a Prefect ought to be. Debonnaire and handsome, he is also tall and commanding. His curly black hair is innocent of grey, but a few silvery strands streak the brown of the beard. A legend declares that the visitor must wear gloves in his presence, and that these articles are for sale in the ante-chamber at 2 fr. 50 the pair. Yet I saw nothing of this when I paid him an official visit ; it is probably one of the amusing inventions of the Boulevard Press. On the contrary, one is conscious only of the cordiality of the welcome : the smiling eyes, the hand outstretched. The great room in which he sits is situated in the southern extremity of the Hôtel de Ville, with windows which glimpse the river with its boats and bath-houses, as well as the broad “Place” in front. On the table are great vases of flowers, and modern pictures and tapestries cover the walls. The ensemble gives one a curious impression of artistic officialism. Such silken

splendour is at variance with our English notions of an office of the sort ; but in France, this blend of art with administration is not unusual. The handsome, big man exactly suits the frame, for he is artist as well as functionary. Few servants of the State in "practical" England or America devote their leisure to painting. The great Spring Exhibitions in the Champs Elysées have seen already M. Delaney's water-colours, inspired, no doubt, by his stay in Corsica, where the scenery is particularly striking. It is as artist, too, that he thinks of the problem of Paris, the problem with which his name most certainly will be associated.

He dreams of a Paris exceeding fair, with wide streets sweeping from the centre to the suburbs. This Paris is to extend practically over the whole department of the Seine, absorb its suburban residential and industrial quarters, its villages and its communes. Along the broad avenues of to-morrow will glide the swift tram, the mobile, adaptable auto'-bus. It will be the prolongation of Paris into the country, instead of the stunted thoroughfares terminating in narrow gates, which now pierce the bulwarks of the city. These new streets will be bordered with trees ; in the suburban squares and gardens fountains will sing ; statues will gleam amongst the foliage and flowers, and preside, like tutelary gods, over laughing children and lovers whispering in secret. There will be

a belt of forest land round Paris, and glad green spots irradiated with sunshine. The great burial-places of the city: Père Lachaise, Montmartre, Montparnasse, and Pantin, will be removed from crowded centres to the country. The graves will lie on warm hillsides, beyond the old ramparts. Thither the Parisian will carry his dead, his sorrows, and his mourning. But such a change takes time—not merely for physical reasons, but for sentimental also. The French people are so home-loving in their instincts, that they keep their dead with them, and separate from them only under pressing circumstances. The beloved spot watered with tears, where the departed lie, is unutterably precious.

A green girdle of garden will arise in the place of the fortifications, which, for long, have hindered the proper expansion of the city. Paris stifles in its earthen corset. This was the feeling of M. Delanney when he succeeded M. de Selves, in the great post of Prefect of the Seine; and so he set about speeding up the legislative machinery, which grinds exceeding slow in France, as in most other countries, that the fortifications might be removed and air let in. The discussion of this subject has lasted ever since the War, but now the Bill is through and the pick of the demolisher has been laid at the base of the green mounds which have served as dormitory for the

Apache, with an irregular background of broken bottles and the rest. The feat is partly due to the personal prestige of M. Delaney. He is *persona grata* with politicians, which is much, and a favourite with his own personnel, which is a great deal more. I know no one who speaks more pleasantly of him than his chief secretary, M. Beaudry, which is a real testimonial, for few men are heroes to their secretaries.

M. Delaney has passed his professional career in an atmosphere of storm. When he was appointed to Corsica the island was convulsed with a political quarrel, and dead and wounded lay in the streets. The cause of conflict was the return of M. Emmanuel Arène as Radical Socialist. As humorist and man of letters, M. Arène must have felt the irony of the situation, for the island is traditionally reactionary. The late deputy, part author of that delightful play *Le Roi* (signed also by MM. de Flers and Caillavet), never dared to set foot in the island after his election. It was at this juncture that M. Delaney arrived to take over his charge. The quays of Ajaccio bristled with guns; the inhabitants had come to welcome the Prefect, and it was their way of showing their intentions. But M. Delaney showed his with such resolution that the opposition melted away; the guns were speechless, and their bearers, who had come to shoot, perhaps, remained to praise.

Before M. Delaney left the island *en route* for other functions, he had made it one of the most prosperous departments in France.

Discord, also, reigned in the Haute Vienne, whither he was sent as Prefect. At Limoges, serious riots had broken out following on a strike amongst the porcelain workers and bootmakers. Blood had flowed in the streets; there were dead and wounded. Through his influence and persuasive power, M. Delaney calmed the excitement, and peace was restored to the famous old manufacturing town. When he was called to the Customs, as Director-General, he was faced, likewise, with an exceptional situation. The officials threatened to abandon their duty *en masse* to call attention to the inadequacy of their pay. Twenty thousand men were concerned. M. Delaney's firmness and fairness saved the day, and, when he left—for his professional life has consisted in a perpetual moving on—there was no more contented service under the folds of the tricolor. Oddly enough, when he passed to the Enregistrement des Domaines et du Timbre he met with similar conditions. It was the moment of the Church Inventories, imposed on an unwilling Catholic world by an anti-Clerical Administration. Fourteen functionaries resigned rather than associate themselves with the work which the Faithful regarded as a prelude to spoliation, but which the

Government declared was nothing but a formal act in the interests of the Church itself. During this trying time, M. Delaney carried out his delicate functions with tact and discretion.

Then the fortune of war carried him to the Hôtel de Ville. Here, also, the air was charged with electricity. M. de Selves had left the various sections of this vast machine in some disorder. His bonhomie had not been equal to a task that required a born organiser. The state of Paris occasioned some lively criticism in the Press—not always disinterested criticism, but, in the main, true enough. M. Delaney at once showed his craftsmanship. Catching up the threads of his work, he wove them into a plain and durable fabric which earned even the approval of the professional critics of civic government. For once the grumblers were won over by the zeal of the Prefect.

One hardly realises the size of the army under the orders of the city of Paris, and therefore owning allegiance to the Prefect. This army numbers sixty thousand men. It includes the school-teachers in the Departmental schools; the staffs employed upon the roads and in the sewers; in the gas, water, and electricity supply; the personnel at the Hôtel de Ville and the various offices of the Seine; the staffs of the asylums, hospitals, and hospices, of the Assistance Publique,

and of the Mont de Piété. Some of these services are not directly administered by the city itself, but the Conseil Municipal retains a general control, and insists upon a certain standard of wages. In a sense, therefore, they are municipal departments. Gas and electricity, for instance, in Paris are worked on a system known as the "*Régie intéressée*." The management is private and the profits above a certain percentage are shared with the city.

M. Delanney is particularly liked by the smaller class of city functionary, because of his accessibility. The humblest roadman or sewerman may readily approach him without the least formality. Interviews are granted, without preliminary letters, every Saturday. If a complaint is substantiated, after inquiry, a remedy is immediately prescribed.

The position of Prefect of the Seine is unique in France. He is one of the three Mayors of Paris; the other two are the *Président du Conseil Municipal* and the *Prefect of Police*. The two *Prefects of the Seine* and *Police* are Government officials; the *President of the City Council* represents, of course, the elective principle. Each has a separate sphere of action. That of the *Prefect of the Seine* is purely administrative, and concerned, as I have said, with roads, gas and water-mains, schools, asylums, and public departments of all sorts. The *President of the Council* dictates the general policy, and is responsible to his colleagues and the rate-

payers; the Prefect of Police, with very large powers, is charged with the security of the city.

There have been great prefects in the past. The greatest was Haussmann; after him was Alphand, who studied, amongst other things, a scheme for underground traction in Paris. Expert opinion, however, declared that the steam-engine would not be able to "breathe" in tunnels; and the problem was not tackled indeed until the construction of the electric underground in the Exhibition Year 1900. Haussmann was a genius in city construction and also in destruction. He destroyed ruthlessly that he might reconstruct. He drove avenues, straight as a crow's flight, through congested districts. If history, romance, and association stood in the way, so much the worse for them. He was very much of a bear, for all his greatness, or perhaps because of it, and would hear no argument against his plans. He was eighteen years at his post before his enemies got rid of him and before the Franco-Prussian War interfered with the financial realisation of his projects.

M. Delanney is of a quite different temperament. He has just as grandiose ideas, but he conceives everything *en artiste*—"Encore plus beau, encore plus beau!" is his cry, and his one aim is to make Paris more beautiful. His talent as a water-colourist received much stimulus, no

doubt, from his stay in Corsica. The gorgeous tints of the scenery, the beautiful sunsets, and the dark masses of the chestnut forests affected his artistic sensibility. He has a fondness, too, for architecture, especially the architecture of the past. This alone would save him from vandalism, even if a new spirit did not exist at the Hôtel de Ville —a desire to save the picturesque. And so, in the vast improvement scheme which he has in mind, and which is being considered by a committee of experts of his own choosing, there will be no wanton or avoidable rooting out of landmarks of the centuries, through which Paris has passed from its origin as a Roman village up to its splendid present, through the dazzling days of the Roi Soleil and the splendour of its emperors.

The Prefect has little time for social pleasures. He plays no Bridge. His chief exercise is cycling. Sometimes he takes his principal coadjutor, a younger man than himself by some years, for a ride of forty or fifty miles on a Sunday, and his companion has had quite enough of it when he has pedalled the last kilometre home. But M. Delanney is a vigorous fifty, and has the energy of a man who has economised his force that he may give it to the public service.

He owes nothing to nepotism, that bane of the French political system. His parentage gave him no particular pull with the authorities. He was

splendidly educated, but he began at the bottom of the ladder—a copying clerk at the Ministry of the Interior, at £70 a year. He took his “licence” in law, which allows him to practise, and was prizeman in the School of Political Science. Thanks to this splendid preparation and his own energy he rose by successive steps in the Ministry of the Interior, and finally became the head of the bureau for Algerian affairs in 1899; in the following year he obtained the ribbon of Legion of Honour. Then he became Prefect of Ariège in 1900, of Sarthe in 1902, Corsica 1904, Haute Vienne 1905. His career has been a perpetual moving on.

In 1907 Marcel Delanney returned to Corsica temporarily as President of the Committee for the reorganisation of the island. He was well received by the inhabitants, who had been impressed by his talents and integrity. In their old-fashioned way—remnant of the feudal days—they bowed before him as he rode through the country. It was supposed that he would be nominated Governor-General for Algeria, and certainly his mastery of Algerian affairs has qualified him for the post; but this position perhaps is to come later.

He has dignity as well as his other qualities. As Prefect of the Seine, the local schools are under his care; to him, therefore, came a deputation of

teachers with a grievance. In France the State pedagogue generally is advanced in opinions and difficult to control. The leader of the deputation having explained his case with a sort of surly eloquence, M. Delanney rose to make his reply. In the course of it he happened to glance round, and remarked with astonishment a shorthand writer seated behind him, taking notes. Suddenly stopping, he drew himself up to his full height—under Charles x. he would have been a member of the Corps des Cent Gardes—and sharply asked what the stenographer was doing there. “He is taking a note of your reply, Monsieur le Préfet,” said the teachers’ representative. “Did I take a note when you were speaking?” retorted M. Delanney. “It is a breach of confidence and an absolute lack of courtesy. I shall not continue. ‘Sortez, Messieurs, sortez!’” and he drove out the disconcerted deputation.

He is a great worker and believes in keeping his staff up to the mark. He makes a close study of each of his subordinates. As a consequence, it was acknowledged in the City Council that he had done more for the good order and cleanliness of Paris in a few months than his predecessor in a lustrum. The old irresponsible manner of tearing up streets for civic purposes exists no more. It would seem as if the impossible had happened; instead of conflicting with one another, the

different departments actually co-ordinate their efforts.

When he succeeded to the Hôtel de Ville, there was obviously much to be done. Prefectorial decrees had been treated as waste-paper ; heads of departments had become practically the masters of the palace. Like the roads outside, the organism seemed to be crumbling to pieces. The water-works pumped into empty cisterns, and if the Seine had continued to rise for another two days there would have been a fresh flood, for the preparations against it were quite ineffectual.

As I said earlier, M. Delaney presents the unusual combination of artist and administrator. Whilst he plans the development of the city he watches over the municipal museums—there are four in his area of jurisdiction—though each, of course, has its own curator. He is an eloquent speaker, and insists on accuracy of expression in his own communications and in those of his assistants. Under such a man the progress of Paris is assured as the city beautiful and as a world-centre of arts and industry.

## LOUIS BLÉRIOT

AVIATION has come so suddenly into the human ken ; it has changed so much both in war and peace ; it has left so much that is vague and indistinct and potential, that it would be folly to attempt to pin it down to earth in a single chapter. I shall not try. Records have been made and unmade with startling abruptness. There is nothing so erroneous to-day as the truth of yesterday. Nevertheless, the pioneers remain. They struggled with difficulty ; they risked their lives and fortunes in making experiments, in evolving types. Of such is Louis Blériot. His reputation is world-wide. He was labouring at problems in the air about the time that the Wright Brothers were conducting secret trials in America. The mystery that shrouded their successes but added to the thrill which they produced. A pedestrian world started to fly, and some succeeded, crushing their way to victory. Besides the Wright Brothers, Santos Dumont opened up astonishing vistas of flight, and Blériot rendered possible to every man of nerve and mechanical grasp the joy and beauty of airmanship. He humanised it. Practical dreamer that he is,



M. BLÉRIOT.



he devised the machine, then he flew with it, and, lastly, he manufactured it until it became a commonplace in mechanics. The ordinary man could fly ; it did not need a demi-god, a radiant creature with winged heels.

Blériot by his laborious and systematic efforts reduced flying to certain principles. He and Farman proved that, with care, it could become as certain and as free from accident as high-speed motoring on land. There was no trick about it ; it was quite simple—if one persevered. That was the spirit that animated his adventures, that carried him through years of endeavour. Seven years he waited for his capricious bride Success ; but he wooed and won her at last, and the winning was as romantic as any courtship could be.

The great British public first heard of him when he sailed over the Channel on 25th July 1909. Readers of newspapers were startled out of their complacency and their sense of security by reading in their favourite organ : “England no longer an island” ; “Britain’s splendid isolation gone.” That Blériot accomplished the feat was no great astonishment to his friends. They predicted it with confidence for days before it happened. To see him sitting beneath his canvas garage on the wind-swept cliff of Barraques, near Calais, was to receive the impression of a forceful man. The lips were set ; the hawk-like nose and wide, strong,

fearless eyes gave a look of determination to the face—the eyes that ranged the sea, noting the wind patches and the foam, the heaving waves, the lowering clouds, waiting, always waiting for a favourable moment to fly the Straits. Aviation is said to produce a special type of face like land motoring. Blériot, certainly, is bird-like—one of those strong-winged creatures that hunt their prey in the clouds, that soar relentlessly to the sun. Blériot has all these qualities, and that is why he conquered after seven years of halting progress. During those seven years he spent a great deal of money—£30,000 probably—for results which were problematical. In spite of his courage he felt the tragedy of it. He experienced the sensations of a gambler who had dissipated his children's fortune in the hope of recovering his losses. But he had to go on. He was convinced that his calculations were right. “I must fly ; I will fly.” And if a man adventures upon a great enterprise in such a spirit, he cannot fail.

Blériot terrified his friends by his accidents. He broke more machines in a single year than any living aviator. Yet he escaped with a few bruises. People rushed up expecting to find him crushed to death ; but he emerged grimly smiling from the tangle of his machine, gave a few sharp orders to his mechanics, and walked away, apparently little the worse for his stunning fall to earth. One of

the most wonderful of his contrivances was the Canard, rightly named, for it waddled painfully. It was the ugly ancestor of the present "Blériot," and had a curious backward movement. Another creature, fearfully and wonderfully made, had a bat-like motion and beat itself to pieces. It was driven by a carbonic-acid motor. Blériot mounted it with some trepidation. It gave a fearsome bound. The pioneer thought of his wife and children; would he ever see them again? He applied the brakes and the machine crashed heavily to earth. The motor would have fallen upon him, it would have been his last flight on earth, had it not been for a protecting piece of wood. Evidently he was not to be killed by aviation.

The great achievement of his life was his flight across the Channel. It was in mid July. The charming belfry of the Place d'Armes at Calais had just sounded three o'clock when Blériot, with his friend Leblanc, drove out to Barraques. After an inspection of the sky, Blériot No. 11 was wheeled solemnly from its canvas shelter. When dawn broke, glorious and exhilarating, with pink streamers across the eastern sky, this Columbus of an aerial world started his motor, got into his seat, took a trial spin, and then headed for England over the white cliffs and shimmering sea. Every one has read of the historic voyage: how that at one

moment he lost his way and could see nothing, neither France nor England, nor the *Escopette*, the torpedo-destroyer which was accompanying him—nothing but the sea, which gave him a disagreeable sensation. His hands rested lightly upon the levers ; he allowed himself to be guided by his motor, just as if it were a sentient thing, and he flew straight, straight as an arrow until he came to the shores of England. There he espied a meadow admirable for the purpose, and upon the meadow is now a monument marking the place of his descent. It was significant that his actual arrival was only seen by foreigners. This foreign-made ship, steered by a foreign pilot, was greeted on landing by two Frenchmen, representatives of the Paris *Matin*. Blériot's eyes first rested on the tricolour carried by one of them, who bestowed upon him the traditional French accolade. Several minutes later a policeman and soldiers in khaki—typical English figures—ran up.

It was Sunday morning, and the good citizens of Dover felt entitled, as does every self-respecting Englishman, to a lengthened Sabbath sleep. One wonders whether an enemy would be sacrilegious enough to invade these shores on the Lord's Day—perhaps even in church hours. In any case, Dover slumbered and slept when Blériot, with a slipper encasing one foot, which had been burned by petrol, stepped from his machine and realised,

perhaps for the first time, that he had done a wonderful thing. And the Press trumpeted his fame over the earth. One remembers the impassioned phrases. What did it avail Britannia if she ruled the waves and not the air ? The fine old policy of minding her own business and letting others do the same had come to an abrupt end. No doubt it had been a vast mistake. Whether she liked it or not, she was now linked to the Continent and forced to share its dangers, its anxieties, its destinies. National service was now imperative. Blériot was a little astonished at all this enthusiasm, and yet it was understandable. People realised that a new era had been born ; to them it seemed the beginning of the *entente*, even more striking and inevitable, perhaps, than the Royal visit to Paris of a few years before. Up to that moment the flights that had been made were round a field or across country, much farther, in fact, than the distance across the Straits ; but they lacked the impressiveness of that event. They were less effective on paper, they were less picturesque. There was something romantic in the idea of grasping hands across the sea, of conquering space by careering the heavens. No one had ever crossed the sea that way before. Blériot became a hero, as great as any general, infinitely greater than any actor.

His ship, such a tiny and incomprehensible thing, lay calmly and unconcernedly on the cliff at Dover

all that day. A canny municipality put a tent over it and charged for admittance in the name of charity, with the practical spirit of the islander. Next day it was carried in triumph to London and squatted upon the main floor of a great London store, like a tired and indifferent bird. But the public, who thronged to see it, were thrilled by the marvel of it. Their pulses had been quickened by the record of a great achievement, and when Blériot appeared, accompanied by his charming wife, the walls of the great emporium rang with shouts of "Vive la France! Vive Blériot!"

The man who bridged the Straits with wings and fuselage, and had added other exploits to his reputation, was born at Cambrai, a town that played its sad involuntary part in the Great War. Blériot's father owned a cambric factory, and the boy's intelligence and liking for machinery were stimulated by the introduction of labour-saving appliances. The earlier processes were slow and cumbrous; the new, marvels of neatness and precision. In watching them, there came to him the wish to be an engineer, which was presently to be realised. His father, who had now become a senator and farmer, and had abandoned his industrial career, wanted him to enter the Polytechnique; but the young man hesitated. It meant sacrificing years to pure theory, for the graduates of this famous school are nothing if not theorists. Had he

become a Polytechnician, one might have imagined him producing a beautiful machine, which would have had but one defect, that it could not fly. Blériot preferred to take the middle path of "Arts and Manufactures," which gave him an excellent training without stifling his energy with non-applicable knowledge. He has had no occasion to regret his education.

His military service was passed in a fort at Tarbes, and he left it as artillery officer of Reserve. But to-day he has entered his proper sphere of military activity and is a captain in the Flying Corps. He served during the War as *Officier de Liaison* between the French and British force, and was with the English at Le Mans and Le Havre. He admires our soldiers for their courage, their discipline, their high efficiency. In flying, they have shown the practical sense of the Germans in standardising types. The flying section in the French Army was, until recently at all events, composed of samples. No two machines were alike. No two pilots could be found to understand the other's aeroplane, and when there was a break-down the parts were difficult to obtain. Having pioneered in flight, it is difficult for France to give her rich inventiveness a final form. But "too many ideas" is a handicap sometimes. Airmanship, it need hardly be said, is desperately militarised in Germany; could you imagine it anything else?

The contrast in the two corps, French and German, is racial and instinctive. The German is a heavier machine—for the heavier man—capable of a sustained flight in air. The French, in its great variety, is more supple, easier to manipulate, better adapted, perhaps, for a dashing aerial fight than for the solid work of hovering over lines and establishing the range. But in aviation, as in gunnery, the man behind the machine, as much as the machine itself, counts on active service.

During war-time Blériot's factory was working day and night turning out aeroplanes for the army. Some of the staff were mobilised, but remained at their work; they and others who were exempted by age sent a portion of their earnings to the wives and children of those at the front. It shows the excellent spirit that prevails at "Blériot's." The demand in England for the machine has caused its inventor to found a factory near Brooklands. Blériot is profoundly Anglophile. His *Daily Mail* prize of £1000, won in the Channel crossing, gave him his great fillip in aviation, and he is not the man to forget his London reception. Memorable is the banquet at which he received his cheque, and memorable also the praise of the present Lord Haldane, then Minister of War.

Blériot's fortune went to support his years of experiment—a fortune made out of motor-lamps.

They were his invention ; they gave eyes to the new locomotion as well as funds to his aerial enterprise. The name *phare* (beacon) was his as well as the thing, and both made their way in the world. For four years the money rolled in, and the young man's dreams of mechanical flight hardened into realisation. War in the air, like the other war, is scarcely possible without the "sinews."

As a boy, his imagination was haunted by Jules Verne. The marvels of science affected him, but it was the sight of Ader's old "Avion," with its articulated wings, as it lay in the Great Exhibition of 1900, that crystallised his ambition. The new traffic in the skies is of the twentieth century ; it was fitting, therefore, that the first French aeroplane should have been in the twentieth-century exhibition to point the way to new efforts. Blériot turned to aviation because it was "in the air." Men's minds were being directed to it. It had been enthusiastically studied and discussed through the ages. The legend of Icarus led on to the brilliant projects of Leonardo da Vinci, to the achievements of Mongolfier, down to the Wright Brothers. Comparatively early in his experiments Blériot decided that the monoplane was the right type, as most nearly approaching the bird ; the outward shape of his machine has remained unchanged since the day it flew the Channel. But,

before that, Santos Dumont, the Wright Brothers, and Farman advertised the virtues of the cellular machine and biplane.

Blériot's monoplane was the first to fly successfully. The French Aero Club recognised its merits by presenting the designer with an enamel medal. The airman has a soft place in his heart for that pathetic little trophy, the first milestone on the road to fame. After Blériot had attempted automatic flight, he undertook trials with gliders, the first of the kind, with which he made memorable experiments at Billancourt on the Seine. It was here that he attacked the problem of heavier-than-air with a biplane of the Wright type. Then he essayed a waterplane on the lake at Enghien, close to Paris. Thereafter came a formal renunciation of the biplane and an adoption of the "mono," with which he flew over the famous ground at Issy-les-Moulineaux.

His conversion to the monoplane led to his separation from Voisin, who was his partner in the early days. Together they built some of the first models, and in recognition of their researches the French Academy awarded them the Osiris Prize of £4000, which they divided equally. It was a sensible encouragement, compensating to some extent for the moral and material damage that was to follow the course of experiment. In one year Blériot disabled a prodigious number of

machines, but, happily, saved himself from serious hurt. The Touray-Arthenay flight and back with one stoppage demonstrated the powers of "Blériot No. 8"; the numbers in between showed how costly had been the progress since No. 1 had been launched. In May 1907 he carried two passengers with him on a flight at Issy. For a full hour he remained in the air at Douai and Juvisy, and afterwards drove his monoplane without special incident from Etaples to Orléans, thus winning the £400 *Prix de Voyage*. Blériot is not superstitious, for he competed for and won his first notable prize on the thirteenth of the month (July 1909), offered by the Aero Club de France for the first cross-country flight of twenty-five miles in an aeroplane accomplished in not more than six hours. He took less than an hour, with one stop. He has always prided himself upon the compact and neat character of his machine. On the night before the battle it lay contentedly on the lee-side of a haystack with a tarpaulin over it. During the day it had bowled along the country roads behind a motor-car at eighteen miles an hour; it had covered great distances that way. The "Blériot" is the smallest of the flying machines. Even with its reservoir filled with the petrol necessary for a flight of two hours, it weighs only 250 kilos, and it can be lodged in the garage of an hotel. Only for a moment did Blériot

abandon the type with which his name is associated and adopt the Lengley, with which he executed some fine flights. But with exaggerated confidence he mounted a 60 h.p. motor upon it, and the result was a disastrous fall, from which, happily, he escaped, however, with only a slight wound. In the following year he furnished his monoplane with the steering gear and brakes which it now possesses.

The Touray-Arthenay flight was won on "Blériot No. 8"; Nos. 9 and 10 followed, and they were disappointing. The airman began his No. 11 with a feeling of desperation. It seemed likely to be his last. "I built it with all the fever with which shipwrecked people lash together a raft," he said. "It meant everything to me, and I founded all my hopes upon it. It was all very well to have made the flight from Etaples to Chavilly (one of his achievements at this time)—that was very good, but it was not enough. One must do more; one must cross the Channel." How adventurous it sounded! After the Channel flight and the glory of it came the first meeting at Reims. How splendid it was! The world was in the first flush of enthusiasm for mechanical flight, and watched with breathless interest the feats of Latham (who was to die shortly after in Africa), of Louis Blériot, of Henri Farman, of Glenn Curtiss, the American, and others. Blériot won the speed contest, flying

6½ miles on his No. 12 in 7 minutes 47 seconds. The closing evening—how well I remember it!—was a perfect August night. Up against the great yellow moon and in the darkening sky flew Latham and Farman and the other adventurous young men, looking like weird gigantic bats in some fantastic page of the scented East. It was a scene triumphant in its scientific achievement. What a contrast with that other picture of the Champagne: cannon booming, death and destruction raging, the very cathedral, with its eternal memories of the Maid, mutilated, and its priceless windows shattered by the invading Germans.

What is the future of aviation? None can tell, least of all those actively engaged in it. Their vision is limited to practical things; they know what can be done, and what it is impossible to do, within the limits of their experience. One cannot ask for more. They are too interested in playing the game to watch the general effect. Aviation has changed the current of the earth, it has broken down frontiers, annihilated distances, rendered ridiculous Customs barriers, proved that England is no longer wholly protected by the sea, given breadth to our imagination by the vivid and unexpected realisation of a dream. The future? Ah! who can tell? Will the aeroplane become an instrument of daily use? Is it merely an engine of destruction? In any case its progress is certain.

Those who braved the dangers of the unknown, who first bestrode the frail craft in the heavens and struggled with the winds, are worthy of all praise. To them is the prize of a great achievement, to them the glory of having shown the way across new continents.

The “irresistible call of space” came to Blériot, I think, not when he was studying trajectories in his fort at Tarbes, but when, as I have said, he gazed upon Ader’s “Avion” at the Great Exhibition of 1900. That queer old machine with its articulated action set his mind whirling in the direction of mechanical flight; it fixed his resolve to be an airman. Is articulated flight then—the flight of birds—possible? Blériot recognises the difficulty of it; it is a problem that at present eludes the grasp of engineers. The aeroplane must be rigid, the more rigid the better to cleave the sky. Even birds, when they fly against the wind or encounter eddies, stiffen out their wings like boards. For the moment, at least, “flight” is mere projection; its secret is still hidden in the breasts of poets and speculators. Blériot’s military experience has given him definite notions of the possibilities of the new arm. He believes that, in the near future, the aeroplane will become not merely an instrument of reconnaissance but a species of armoured cruiser, having heavy guns and manned by fifty men.

Such a ship is already possible. It will administer the *coup de grâce* to the Zeppelin, which is too vulnerable, too slow and cumbersome, for modern warfare. And this new engine will be able to travel at night and inflict damage upon an unsuspecting world by dropping explosives upon aviation sheds, by cutting railway lines, and in destroying troops upon the march—not in killing women and children, observed Blériot sententiously, thinking of the visits of Tauben to Paris when the Germans were on French soil. And yet isolated visits of aeroplanes to cities are of little effect as a means of intimidation. One must send a flotilla—after due notice of bombardment—and throw down bombs daily, hourly, upon church steeples, railway stations, markets, public buildings. In this way a city may be reduced by sheer terror of the skies. Light-hearted Paris is not to be brought to its knees by the casual visit of an aviator on a Sunday morning; but if forty aeroplanes had appeared in the clouds, even the cat and the concierge who kept ward over large portions of the city would have fled likewise during the “black week” when the Germans were so close.

Wells has scarcely surpassed the truth in his imaginative picture of the war of the worlds. The aerial duel has come, and this thing, not yet twenty years old, has changed the face of tactics. One

must rewrite the text-books. If Napoleon had had an aeroplane at Waterloo he could have looked behind the ridge—and the result would have been, perhaps, a drawn battle. A surprise on a large scale is no longer possible, since each army is too well informed of the other's movements. The art of war has undergone already a great change as the result of the new scout, which continually enlarges its powers with successive development. A few years ago the aeroplane was weather-bound on a windy day ; but now the airman despairs the tempest and takes advantage of every fog to bombard a city into surrender. Though it is not powerful enough to effect a great slaughter, the aerial bomb is capable of creating much perturbation by reason of its formidable explosion and from that sense of powerlessness which comes to the victim of an attack from an enemy keeping at a safe distance in the heavens.

Happily for his peace of mind, Blériot is not always thinking of destruction. His inventive brain takes a kindlier turn when he is seated on his aeroplage over a stretch of firm level sand at Hardelot. His sail-driven sand boat is Scandinavian in origin, but Blériot introduced it to France and finds it excellent fun. This pleasant northern coast has given him a summer villa, which he has amusingly named "Escopette," after the friendly "destroyer" which accompanied him to Dover with

his wife aboard whilst he kept the upper way. The name conjures up the vision of the husband and wife meeting at the pier-head at Dover and quietly embracing as if nothing very particular had happened in the interval when they left Calais together, he in the azure sky on the wondrous machine that had the look of a gadfly and the colour of a grasshopper, and she upon the black-nosed scout on the tumbling waters of the Channel. And when they met on English soil, he was as calm and collected as if he had alighted from a cab. Where were the wild gesticulation and excitement of the French? It was too bad! All our illusions were going.

The large family of five is joyously packed into the "Escopette" in the bright summer season. What time he is not cruising upon the sand this captain of aviation gives to the sea—his motor-boat—another of his hobbies. But his children occupy much of his time and thoughts. There is a pleasant photograph of them on Blériot's desk at his factory at Levallois Perret: Nellie presides over the little group in all the pride of her fourteen years. What excitement there was in the house at Neuilly when father sailed the Straits in the new way. Nellie had her own appreciation of the event. "Et vous savez la mer est grande," she said to a visitor, to explain the significance of the feat. Yes, the sea is great, and great its conqueror.

Blériot's other tastes lie inland. He is an agriculturist like his father after he had given up his works. He has a farm at Buc, close to his flying-ground, the scene of some interesting events. One hardly recognised its peaceful character during the War, for it presented an exact contrast with the Biblical picture of spears being turned into pruning-hooks and swords into ploughshares. Farm implements were hidden behind cannon and machine guns, and parts of military aeroplanes protruded from pastures hitherto given to sheep and ducks. It was a centre of military endeavour, like the flying-ground itself. From a Farman biplane I looked down one day upon an aerial Derby, noting the pleasant diversity of this country: its rolling meadows and woods and sheet of placid water. At Buc is Blériot's aerodrome, with grandstand and restaurant attached, and sheds for the machines that he makes for his own and other Governments. And Blériot's house hereabouts is further proof of his prosperity and multiple activities.





MME. PAQUIN.

## MADAME PAQUIN

MADAME PAQUIN, with her fresh complexion, black patch, and lock of grey hair setting off the soft oval of her face, looks as if she had just stepped from the frame of some eighteenth-century painter—Gainsborough or Lawrence or Vigée-Lebrun—some one who knew how to paint beautiful women. Yet, in spite of her air of elegance, she is an intensely keen, practical woman, managing a great house of business in the Rue de la Paix. It is true that she is aided by her brother, M. Joire, but it is an open secret that she is the guiding spirit of the enterprise, with its twelve hundred employés and its branches in London, New York, and Buenos Ayres. If, in the flowing lines of her costume, the delicate shading of her hair, the *grande dame* manner, she recalls the mellifluous period of ruffles and buckle shoes, her active and indeed strenuous life belongs to the twentieth rather than the eighteenth century. I know no one more imbued than she with the idea of progress. She is indefatigable in her search for perfection. With the amazing energy of a Sarah Bernhardt, she is capable, like her, of lunch-

ing at four o'clock and dining at ten in the midst of great occupations. Edison's test for an assistant is that he should forget his meals in his zeal for the laboratory ; Mme Paquin would certainly satisfy that requirement.

Probably she would have undermined even her robust health, were it not for her mother, who watches over her, solicitous for her comfort and happiness, as if she were still a small child. Fresh-looking, with eyes of blue—blue like the Lake of Killarney—this devoted woman resides with her daughter, in her beautiful flat in the Rue de Presbourg, near the Arc de Triomphe, overlooking a pleasant garden and verdant lines of avenues radiating from the Etoile. I fancy she has no particular opinion of Parisiennes, except of this one, born, by the way, at the gates of Paris, at St. Denis, the burial-place of the kings of France ; for the society mother of to-day either spoils or neglects her children, according to her view of it. Born in the Berry, on a great farm, she has the quiet tastes of the country, with little sympathy for the hothouse plant. She herself grew and flourished as grow the ferns on some hillside. Mother of five by two husbands—the first was a doctor and Mme Paquin's father—she brought up the children herself. Her family consisted of six, for to her own offspring was added a little cousin, adopted principally because there was no one else

to adopt her. And to all she gave a trade, so that they might be independent if the necessity arose. That is how Mme Paquin learnt dress-making as a girl. When she had the happiness to meet M. Paquin, the two went into business together, and together they mounted the ladder which leads to reputation, to a town house, to a charming villa at Deauville, to anything and everything.

It has led, certainly, to the red ribbon that gleams on the corsage of the best known *couturière* in the world. "The idea of decorating a dressmaker!" the superior person cries. "What has the Legion of Honour, which Napoleon founded for his heroes and distinguished civilians, to do with her?" But Mme Paquin, certainly, has as good a right to wear the Order as any civilian, for by her industry and talent she has benefited the nation as well as her particular profession. She has spread abroad a taste for French art and elegance as much as any writer or actress. That is why I feel justified in placing her in my gallery of Makers of France.

M. and Mme Paquin brought youth and high hopes, some technical skill, and £6000 in cash to the business in the Rue de la Paix, which they founded five-and-twenty years ago. The moment was propitious. The war had come and gone and left a wreck behind. But the country was too

vital to remain long under its depressing influence. On all hands were signs of revival, and in these buoyant circumstances the little barque was launched. *Industries de luxe*, for which Paris has long been famous, were the last to rise to prosperity. Nor was it surprising that people should restrict their expenditure on superfluities in times of national distress; such a market is more sensitive to unfavourable conditions than any other. The two young people—she was nineteen and he was twenty-four—set to work to profit by this movement; he had given up a bank management to become a dressmaker.

With the glee of children, they established themselves in a flat scarcely bigger than the drawing-room, filled with rich *objets d'art*, in Mme Paquin's own residence to-day. In a few years the single flat became twenty, and workrooms, filled with gay little midinettes, laughing and chattering like birds, thrust a none the less sedate façade into neighbouring streets. The house of Paquin was founded; but, in its upward movement, it needed more capital. Mme Paquin turned to England for it, and is grateful to this country for having provided it—in the true spirit of enterprise so strangely wanting in the French, in spite of their commercial aptitudes.

Being thus favourably disposed towards John Bull, she was destined to make his closer acquaint-

ance. The English school of portraiture at the National Gallery has no more ardent admirer than she, and none more appreciative of the innate distinction of those sitters to fashionable brushes. And what documents for the study of dress ! There must be different standards of embellishment for the two nations, for face and figure are different. Piquant and picturesque sum up some of the more palpable differences. Englishwomen are not piquant, few French are picturesque ; but if our country-women are wanting in "chic," they make up for it in "race" and breeding. All this means that the principles of raiment change with the latitude, but the latitude must not be too great ! Nowadays there is a levelling up amongst the nations. If Paris leads, London and the other capitals make haste to follow. The dressing of a London crowd is infinitely better than twenty years ago.

These are fascinating topics, but they do not exhaust the conversational powers of Mme Paquin. I know no one more competent than she to give an opinion on most things having relation to the sex. Though one of the most capable women in the world, she is extremely moderate in her Feminism. Just after she was decorated, she remarked to me : "I am glad the Government has recognised my work, independent of my sex ; that is as far as my Feminism goes. I do not think women should plunge into every avenue of employment, any more

than I think homes will be happier when women discuss politics with tired husbands. The latter can read that sort of thing in the newspaper."

Mme Paquin, you may be sure, has no sympathy with the militant, whom she considers out of harmony with the age—an age of reason and persuasion as opposed to force—notwithstanding the Great War. Nor could any one, knowing her elegance and charm, imagine that she would countenance the crude methods of house-burners and the rest. "Localised madness," she calls it. Indeed, Feminism has made vast progress everywhere—except in England. After all, this tired old world is more amenable to smiles than hatchets. Even cannon must yield to moral force. In trying to be "serious" the suffragette has become ridiculous. And, really, her strange pranks have merely complicated the question.

M. Paquin showed in his life the rare combination of artist and business man. If a great grasp of details is required to run a large commercial concern, talent is likewise needed to evolve a dress. How is it done? It is one of the secrets of the gods. Mme Paquin lifts occasionally the veil in conversation with her friends. The dress designer, she says, is influenced by events—by a new play, a costume ball, a new kind of flower. A sunset may suggest new colours to her palette; the spring-time has its own tender message; old engravings and

old masters also inspire the creator of clothes. On days when Mme Paquin is in form she will design five or six new dresses; when the ideas will not come, she abandons the task until the following day.

You will conjure up a vision of sheets of paper, a busy pencil, puckered brows, disordered hair, much burning of the midnight oil. You will be wrong. It is not in this way that Mme Paquin contrives her triumphs. She does not first sketch out the dress and then make it up, but makes it that it may be sketched. The creation is almost instantaneous, swift as laughter upon a thought. With a deft turn or two of the material in which she is working, and with the aid of a few pins, the dress leaps into being. Very likely it grows upon the back of a pretty *mannequin*, who will carry it, presently, in all its glittering seductiveness, before the dazzled eyes of purchasers.

Materials play a larger part in dress-construction than one supposes. The material suggests the dress nine times out of ten. In her cave of wonders, surrounded by her beautiful fabrics, the Queen of *la Couture* is moved to create new designs from the mere pleasure of handling shimmering tissues which seem to take shape of themselves, to grow into lovely living forms like some new miracle of Pygmalion and Galatea.

"In England one can get only samples," she

said to me in explaining some of her secrets ; "in Paris, manufacturers shower tissues upon one. Look at this !" she took up a piece of ivory satin, exquisite in its beauty and plastic suggestiveness. Here, evidently, is a medium as rich in its potentiality to the creative artist as a pure block of marble to the sculptor. Many thousands of francs' worth of material lie in this house of the Rue de la Paix : dresses *in posse* for all the world, dresses for the stage, for French racecourses, for drawing-rooms in Belgravia. Belgravia, naturally, has its own notions—sometimes at variance with the Rue de la Paix. Beginning with "the highest lady in the land," English society revolts on occasion from imported fashion. And it is often right in insisting on an individual style which so accords with national character.

Clothes express the epoch ; this is Mme Paquin's dictum. Part of the superiority of Paris comes not merely from the deftness of the little workgirls in the region dominated by the Vendôme Column, but from that continuity in dress which subtly and sartorially links aristocratic France—France of the Roi Soleil—with France of the Revolution, of Louis Philippe, of the Second Empire down to the Third Republic. The costume gives the picture of the time ; strict convention as well as liberty and licence are represented in it. The too great freedom of yesterday has produced a reaction,

says Mme Paquin—as if we were moving towards some new crinoline age. Dressmakers are historians, writing the moods of the moment in curves and stitches. Madness of political thought produces madness in the Mode.

Doubtless, also, Sartor works for the peace of the earth, for the *Pax Concordia*, when the nations will cease from battle and their flags will fly together. It is not for nothing that the street of the dressmaker is called the Rue de la Paix. A veritable mission issued a short while ago from the Paquin portals. It was headed by Mme Paquin's sister-in-law, Mme Joire, and its destination was America. In her train were *mannequins*, than whom none could so fittingly present Paris models to fascinated feminine New York. It was a real exhibition of art, and was accepted in that spirit—after some protest from the native dressmaker. Was America to be permanently invaded? Was Mme Paquin going to turn the tables on those who filched her designs? But the objects of the expedition were essentially pacific; no reprisals were contemplated, though Paquin's, as well as the other houses, have been forced to protect themselves from foreign depredation. Thus are freedom and peace spread abroad by those who fabricate the fashions.

The picture I have drawn of Mme Paquin would not be complete without reference to her kindness

of heart and consideration for subordinates. She praises her assistants as the élite of *la couture*. “Are not great qualities needed for success in dress-making : good health, good taste, good looks, an infinity of tact ?”

I will close simply with the remark that the red badge of honour which illuminates her grey-green corsage, with its silver embroideries, is richly deserved. In and out of the Rue de la Paix “Chevalier” Paquin is a notable figure ; but, like a certain celebrated Athenian, she is rarely seen but on her way to and from the Forum.





M. GUITRY.

## LUCIEN GUITRY

GUITRY is one of the figures who dominate the stage of their time as Irving did, Charles Mathews, Macready, and Kean, or as Talma and Frédéric Lemaître on the other side of the Channel. He makes any part interesting; he carries any play. There is something thrilling in the way in which he opens a letter, something impressive in his manner of receiving a visitor, as if a world of fate hung upon the news he brought. In person he is colossal. He has big shoulders, a big body, a big, handsome head. Instinctively women say, "Qu'il est beau!" If it is possible not to like him on the stage, it is impossible not to feel his power. He plays with extraordinary conviction the commonest part. The danger is that, having heard him, you may be tempted to believe the veriest melodrama a masterpiece, for Guitry puts such emphasis and passion into it and such tempestuous eloquence that you are carried away. This is his art—the art of the actor.

You cannot compare him, except in power, with any other actor, for his style is distinctly personal. It is not made up of rule and tradition, of the

classic theatre and the conservatoire. He has studied the classics, he has won distinction in the national school of dramatic art ; but, having learnt all the systems, he has thrown them away to adopt his own, and that own is an extreme naturalness that doesn't amount to a system at all. Antoine, it is true, broke down many conventions, product of the old classical teaching, when he founded the Théâtre Libre ; but he himself lacked the preliminary training necessary to become a great actor of the new school : it was Guitry who led the phalanx, if any one so individual as he can be said to lead anybody. I think his ten years' stay at Petrograd at the Théâtre Michel gave life and freshness to his art and freed him from the cramping influence of the Boulevard. And there is in it something of the primitive strength and violence of the Slav. Russia still possesses the untrammelled vigour of youth ; it is the one country in Europe where there is an eternal spring of impressionism.

Guitry is the natural man acting. He allows each impulse not only to be seen but felt, by the strength and directness of his tone and attitude. He is not merely the actor—he is the man. Every personal trait helps in the realisation of his rôle ; he is the physical envelope of his personage. So closely is the one knit with the other, that the effect is entralling in its verity. When the spell has ceased, the audience murmurs : Which is life ?

which is illusion ? Where does the one begin and the other end ? Is it all life, is it all illusion ? And Guitry contributes to our bewilderment by choosing characters that fit him like a glove. He has no need of make-believe. He likes the clear-cut silhouette of his part, and feels entangled in disguises.

As a quite young man he was a *jeune premier* of exceptional ardour and physical attractiveness. Women in the audience held their breath when he paid his addresses to the heroine ; it was almost as if a religious rite were being performed. They were wonderful days when Sarah Bernhardt and Guitry played together in London as well as Paris. The association lasted some years. Guitry's first rôle, curiously enough, was Armand Duval in the *Dame aux Camélias*, which the divine Sarah has made so peculiarly her own, until one feels that there could be no perfectly satisfying Marguerite Gauthier but she.

Though only a little over fifty, Guitry has a son of thirty, who is already famous both as actor and playwright. And Guitry *père* is a playwright also ; but until quite late in life, an unacted one. He made his first appearance in his first play at the time this book was in the Press, and the event excited Paris. His long delay in facing the foot-lights as an author was due to his search for perfection. As a friend remarked of him, "He is very

hard to please"; and that friend was Tristan Bernard, than whom, of course, there is no more successful playwright in the world.

But if Guitry, until this moment, has never mounted one of his own plays, he has given counsel to others and got himself, I daresay, heartily disliked for it. There is the famous dispute, now happily healed, between Guitry and Paul Bourget, the essayist and novelist. "Pauvre Bourget," began Guitry's letter—respect was never his strong point. He claimed some sort of collaboration with the author of *Le Tribun* which the latter repudiated. No doubt there were cases in which he had given larger help and where his art in building text has been as greatly exercised as his ability to mould the plastic rôle. And such power has its dangers, as well as its advantages, to the dramatist.

He has inspired, certainly, many a play, whether authors are prepared to admit it or not. He is a man of observation, noting intently the things that pass in the street. A Monsieur lifts his stick to another man, well-dressed like himself, in the Rue de la Paix, the heart of fashionable Paris, and then, suddenly—the watchful actor cries to the young man at his side: "Write that play," and that young man, if he is wise and fortunate, hastens to obey, and a play is born.

Guitry's rôles were obviously written for him.

This is particularly true of Bernstein's "Samson," which is the most powerful of any. Guitry is at his best here. He translates with extraordinary insight the masterful Brachard, the self-made man : vulgar, assertive, brutal. He discovers the unfaithfulness of his wife, who is disgusted at his plebeian character ; he meets domestic intrigue with just those uncompromising methods which have enabled him to amass his fortune. But she is fascinated by his force, by the savage violence of his love for her, and, unconsciously, is won. Guitry's reading of the part is sensational. One is absorbed by its reality. When he strikes a blow it is a real blow, palpable in its verity.

"Ah, he will certainly strangle that man," you say, uncomfortably conscious in your stall of the hand that has caught the victim by the throat, as if it were at your own windpipe. There is ferocity in the act. You watch with eyes big with apprehension the result of the combat. Your heart is in your mouth. It is savage, it is cruel ; but it is life. The man is primitive, a conqueror, and yet with nature complicated by artistry. The mask is singularly in keeping with the character. The large face is lighted with the fires of intelligence, gleaming under shaggy brows ; the forehead is singularly commanding. That expression struggles for mastery with the mocking spirit of Paris, for Guitry possesses that dangerous quality to a great

degree. It flashes out at odd moments in his conversation. Is he ever really serious ?

He has extraordinary powers of imitation which give colour and vivacity to his conversation. Most entertaining of men, one is not surprised at his close friendship with Sem and Tristan Bernard —two of the wittiest Parisians of the day. He is inexpressibly droll when he relates snatches of dialogue overheard in the street : the banal generalities of a cavalry officer, galloping by from the military school, uttered in a loud voice that his riding companion may hear, or the petrifying remark of the *cocher* when he collides with the barrow of an elderly costermonger. All this vibrant life of Paris passes before the observant eyes of Guitry, impresses him and affects his art—impresses him with the feeling that humanity is eternally the same. The Esquimaux, the Tuareg, has much the same emotions : love, greed, anger, jealousy ; an aeroplane soaring in the sky awes and impresses him ; the vision of death frightens him.

I like to hear, too, his impressions of London, where he played with Sarah Bernhardt, where he was married at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, and where he noted with those humorous and sharpened eyes of his the way of life in the streets : the dignity and calm of English methods, the distinction and *savoir faire* that attach them-

selves even to the commoner type. Guitry is delightful in the reminiscent mood when he talks of Russia, of the countries of South America, or when he plunges straightway into literature and takes some old favourite from his book-shelves to illustrate a point. The art of biography, there it is : a portrait limned in a few lines ; and he reads a passage from *Sainte-Beuve*, the *Goncourts*, or perhaps a writer from the seventeenth century.

We talk of heroism, of great deeds, of self-denial, and Guitry tells of a lioness who flung herself upon the lion to save the keeper, and he tells it with such rhetoric and such vision that we see it all, and follow breathlessly the episode. Prince of players, he is, also, prince of raconteurs.

As a genial type "Monsieur Piégois" is hard to beat. It is one of Guitry's great rôles and one of Capus's happiest inventions. Piégois is a casino proprietor, and a curious compound of naïveté and knavery, of bonhomie and bluster, who plucks the pigeons without a scruple, feeling convinced that they are there to be plucked, or why should the process be so easy ? Guitry is delightful in such a part, giving it a whimsical and attractive turn. In direct contrast with the easy optimism of Piégois, is the pathetic figure of Crainquebille. Crainquebille is a costermonger, and Anatole France has made him the peg from which to hang a sombre and despairing philosophy of life.

Crainquebille is the predestined victim of the social system, the butt of police oppression. Unable to struggle against fate by the very force of circumstances, he is driven like a lamb to the slaughter, and sacrificed on the altar of an efficient State. Guitry makes the study particularly poignant.

Henry Lavedan's *Servir* provides another contrast even more striking than that between Piégois and Crainquebille. Though written by a distinguished academician, it is little more than melodrama; but Guitry makes it singularly convincing. When as Colonel Falin he takes the flag from its case on the wall and places it to his breast, one is thrilled in spite of one's dislike for heroics on such a subject. (Of course one loves one's country just as one loves one's mother.) But Guitry reproving anti-militarism in his son,—a young engineer officer,—and advocating the cult of country, is impressive enough to vibrate any patriotic heart.

In *L'Assaut* his rôle of Alexandre Mérital is equally sympathetic and infinitely more varied in its complexion. It is Bernstein in his new manner: tender and sentimental, almost *la fleur bleue*, and Guitry, himself, exhibits a half-forgotten side of his character: he is charmingly romantic and persuasive. When he is describing his past to the young girl who has prettily proposed to

him, he is irresistible. There is no living actor in France or England capable of making as interesting as Guitry does a long speech. How exciting he renders this common story of robbery from an employer, an old attorney, because his young clerk has to buy comforts for a sick wife. But to the false political friend who has been secretly encouraging a campaign of defamation against him on the eve of the elections, Mérital shows another side of his character, and almost slays the man in his passion.

Both actor and author put themselves right before the public by this play. Guitry showed that he was not exclusively a player of the "Samson" type, incapable of interpreting the softer side of life; and Bernstein revealed an unsuspected strain of poetry. Before *L'Assaut* the public was convinced that he could depict simply the unpleasant side of life, its harshness and brutality, with no perception of love and tenderness. Bernstein, too, was blamed—ironically—for the riots which accompanied the performance of his *Après Moi* at the Comédie Française. Some one discovered that he had deserted from the army as a young man and, as a consequence, was unworthy of being played at the National Theatre; but his own frankness in acknowledging his fault, as well as his courage in defending his honour on the duelling-ground, regained for him

the public sympathy which was strengthened on the appearance of the play.

Thus, *L'Assaut* vindicated the fact that Bernstein could write a delightful play as well as a sensational one, and that Guitry could be sympathetic and seductive as well as "strong." It was to reinforce this good impression, perhaps, that Guitry, when he played a "shark" (*Les Requins*), created by M. Niccodemi, made the predatory species almost as harmless as a dove.

Guitry's house in the Avenue Elisée Reclus, overlooking the Champ de Mars, is a sumptuous abode more like a palace than an actor's dwelling-place. It is a little Trianon, quite low, with wide, handsome rooms; French windows lead out on to a terrace which commands the square with its trees and flowers. Guitry is proud of his wood-carvings, of his pictures and bric-à-brac. He has a Nattier, a Greuse, and the rest. It is here, amongst his treasures, that he receives his friends, early of a morning, for he is no lie-abed. He is wont to wear a dressing-gown and a pink calotte, which give him much the look of Irving as Cardinal Wolsey.

Guitry's greatest success is in such rôles as Coupeau in *L'Assommoir*, Voysin in *Le Voleur*, Alexandre Mèrital (*L'Assaut*). He is also extraordinarily interesting as Cortelon in *La Griffe*, which was written by Bernstein at a very early age. It is the story of a politician who, at the

end of his career, is overwhelmed by a scandal, and makes a tremendous and agitated appeal in his own cause. Guitry, in his acting of the part, reminds one of the elder Irving, in *The Bells*. His biggest achievements have been in Bernstein drama. It best suits his temperament; none can render with greater force the character of the strong man.

The comedian's chief power is his perfect naturalness, suggesting freshness and spontaneity. His gestures, like his language, seem to be quite unstudied. Though the style is perfect, there is running through it the feeling of an elemental force. Guitry is titanic. His entrance on the stage gives you the impression that something great is going to happen. A slight inflexion of the voice, the flicker of an expression on the set face, speaks of catastrophe. He can convey the sense of suspended calamity. Perhaps, as I have suggested earlier, he learned something of his art in Russia, where he was ten years at the Théâtre Michel, Petrograd. Here was born Sacha, who has become celebrated as a writer of light and elegant plays, delicate and impertinent, with the impertinence of the Boulevard.

A tremendous memory has aided Guitry in his career. He learns not only his rôle but the whole play, and could understudy any part. It is wonderful to see him, with two chairs and a

screen, go through an entire act, in an author's drawing-room, playing each of the characters and imitating with amusing fidelity the feminine voices. This is a young woman, you are sure, and that an elderly one. And he rehearses a long play without reference to the MS. His power of visualisation is of a great advantage in drilling the company. He knows when and how each incident happens, and so, in the first act, he is able to tell Mlle Gaby exactly why she makes her exit on the right instead of on the left. "You will see it all in the third act," he assures her impressively. Guitry carries every detail in his head, but makes light of his gift—"a mere question of will-power," he declares.

He was always rather intractable. As a quite young man at the age of eighteen he fled from the daily deadly round of the Conservatoire to the larger life of the Boulevard, and thereby incurred a fine of £400. By all the rights he should have stayed at the Conservatoire for another year, having gained a second in tragedy and comedy; but he preferred to depart and enter the Gymnase. His was not the temperament to play Britannicus and the solemn historio-tragic personages at the Comédie Française. Modern life attracted him; he could never grow lyrical and romantic over the griefs of the Golden Age.

As I have mentioned already, his first rôle

was Armand Duval in the *Dame aux Camélias*, that famous Dame aux Camélias which Sarah Bernhardt incarnates with such extraordinary charm. Guitry was not particularly brilliant in the part, but was looked upon as a young actor of promise. Nearly twenty years after, he revived the play, this time with "La Divine." Experience and success had given him a hold upon his audience which he did not possess at his début. Power had replaced the flame of youth.

He was very popular in Russia. Paris was more difficult to win, but triumph and a firm reputation came at last. I think his chief chance occurred when Sarah Bernhardt, departing on one of her numerous tours in America, left him in charge of the Renaissance. One of his cleverest creations was that of a Deputy, who became a Minister, in François de Curel's *La Figurante*. Antoine, who founded the Théâtre Libre and became director of the Odéon, acted in the company. Short runs are characteristic of the French stage; pieces rarely last more than a few weeks, or a few months, and the actor in vogue gets an immense practice in delineating types. Guitry's impersonations included a rather unconvincing Macbeth at the Odéon, Agathon in Maurice Donnay's *Lysistrate* at the then existing Eden Theatre (it was M. Donnay's first play),

Yann in Pierre Loti's *Pêcheur d'Islande*, Claude in *La Femme de Claude* of Dumas Fils, and a dozen others.

I have said that he was an attractive and enthusiastic lover, but that side is not uppermost in his nature. His first impulse is to use the club rather than the rapier. Guitry is immense in his own territory—the greatest actor on the stage to-day—but he has limitations. The romantic or the lyrical are beyond him; he cannot play Rostand or Shakespeare, and he failed in the *Princesse Lointaine*, as he failed in *Chantecler*. He made a fine rustling figure in his cock's feathers, but the soul of the idealist was absent; he has neither the artistic faith nor the clarion voice of Coquelin aîné, for whom this symbolical part was written. Guitry presents a particular man in all his failings and foibles, his arrogance, his brutality and self-assertion, his cynicism and cruelty, his tender moments and his weakness, with amazing penetration and power. "Thou art the man," you feel, under the spell of his magic. But in other circumstances Guitry fails to grip. I have seen him in romantic rôles, and I have seen him as a Duke and other exalted personages, when I have felt that the reading was not exact. But the greatest artists, just as the least, rarely attain to an all-round perfection.

No doubt he would have lost in originality and

spontaneity what he gained in classicism had he entered the Comédie Française and mounted by slow degrees the steps which lead to the *societaire's* "full share" in the receipts of the National playhouse. He preferred not to wait; he chose his own path, which was the more adventurous because he could not see the end and because it lay across unknown experiences. Years later, he became stage-director of the Comédie for a few months; but internal difficulties, a species of strike amongst the actors because of the suppression of the Reading Committee (one of their old privileges), caused him to seek again the vivifying air of the outer world. Guitry has not the temperament of the functionary, whether that functionary belongs to a state playhouse or not.

Coquelin's death brought him to the Porte St. Martin. He created *Chantecler*, with the result that I have stated, but he did not stay long. He shook off the dust of the Boulevards for the wide pampas of South America. Oddly enough, he has re-entered the portals of the Hertz-Coquelin combination, and we shall see what new successes await him in a company of constellations. His strength is his individuality. As Hadj the beggar man in *Kismet* he was not, frankly, "composed." Though his face was stained with walnut juice, he was still Guitry. He is not good in elaborate make-up, and only moves his audience when he is obviously

and entirely himself; then he is unsurpassed. In *Kismet*, perhaps, he was too much occupied with the details of an elaborate production to give complete attention to his part. He is not able always to submerge his personality in his subject.

This is the man who is at the head of the French stage to-day, whose talents are extremely varied, and whose tireless enthusiasm for his art has made him one of the most remarkable players of the world.





M. BRIEUX.

## EUGÈNE BRIEUX

THERE is no one further removed from the pose of the successful man of letters than Brieux. He is simplicity itself. His welcome is cordial and, when he speaks, there is no pomposity in his voice. He is not the least ashamed of his origin, which is quite humble. His father was an artisan and could give Brieux no educational advantages; his own position has been won at the price of constant effort. Grey hair sets off the virile features of a man of fifty-six. His robust frame suggests the farmer rather than the dramatist; in reality he is both. His farm is in the Beauce, one of the most fertile regions of France, where, under a serene grey-blue sky, stands the finest Gothic in the world. Here Brieux works and thinks—thinks out the big and vital problems which profoundly interest him. It is because of his interest in these questions that he is one of the Makers of France. More than any contemporary writer he has criticised the bourgeoisie; if it cannot be reformed, it has sons and daughters who are influenced by what they see and hear on the stage, just as a former generation was moved by the comedies of Scribe

and Legouv . Brieux has the message of the reformer to deliver. If he cannot speak it as powerfully as Tolstoi and Ibsen, he has the same sincerity and is worthy of the same respect.

The first play to attract attention was *Blanchette*. The State is illogical, says the author, in providing education and no adequate scheme of employment for the energies aroused. *Blanchette* is a publican's daughter. She cannot get a post as teacher, for which she has been trained, and she is unfitted for any other; she thus becomes a failure manufactured by public moneys.

The play to win Brieux greatest fame was *La Robe Rouge*, in many respects a masterpiece. It is a terrific indictment of the magistracy. A man wrongly accused of murder is caught in the meshes of the law and cannot escape. The *juge d'instruction* is determined to secure a conviction at all costs, and tortures the wretched man, and especially his wife, with all manner of questions, which only render them more confused. The magistrate is a *noceur*, and is implicated in the most scandalous affair; but his political "pull" saves him and he even obtains preferment. Meanwhile, the trial comes on and the innocent person takes his stand for murder. The Procurator G n ral is about to address the Court for the prosecution, when he is suddenly assailed by doubts. What if the man is not guilty? He communicates his difficulties to

the judge and fellow-counsel, but they only sneer at his weakness. . . . The prisoner is acquitted but his life is ruined. He has learnt something about his wife, Janetta, which he cannot forgive. In her youth she has committed a grave fault by running away with a young man who, to obtain funds for the purpose, robs his father's till. They are both arrested ; he is liberated, but she receives a month's imprisonment. One feels that Brieux introduces the incident to show the inequality of the sexes before the law. The husband is pitiless. He shuts the door against his wife. His home is devastated ; he can no longer stay in the locality, and he goes away.

The play is a scathing commentary on French judicial methods. Some profess to find it exaggerated, but others, with equal knowledge, declare it to be a true bill. It needs courage to expose abuse entrenched behind custom and the dignity of the Red Robe, and Brieux is to be congratulated in fearlessly demanding fair play for prisoners and in exposing a terrible judicial *arrivisme*.

In *Les Avariés* he attacks a problem as painful as it is urgent. Public opinion no longer forbids its discussion in France, but the production of the play was long delayed owing to the Censor. Moralists, even in England, now realise that it is better to recognise an evil than to pretend to disregard it in the name of purity.

*Maternité* preaches against society, which ostracises the *fille mère* whilst protesting that it needs children. *Résultat des Courses* fights the betting question and shows up the vices of the working man. *La Femme Seule*, one of his latest plays, exhibits the difficulties of the girl in making a way for herself against what Brieux, in conversation with me, called the *muflerie de l'homme*.

You will see that he deals with “burning questions.” He has the courage of his convictions and speaks the truth without ambiguity. But realism needs the softening influence of moral inspiration to make it acceptable to humanity, and it is impossible not to feel the moral conviction behind what Brieux says. He is ever ready to draw a sword against wrongs, considering only indifference and inaction dishonourable. And since one must fight, it is better to be inspired by great and generous ideals.

Brieux’s strenuousness is held by some to militate against his claim to be an artist. It would be folly to pretend that he is a stylist. His plays possess the rude vigour of health and are often wanting in grace. He rants behind his characters and is evidently the preacher intent on making converts. As a boy, his thoughts took a serious turn; he wanted to become a missionary. The proselytising spirit has remained, but it has become tinged with the philosophy of Herbert

Spencer. To repudiate Brieux is to repudiate the drama of ideas. Æschylus, Shakespeare, and Goethe also stand for ideas, and, if Brieux cannot be compared with any of these, at least their prestige may be evoked to palliate his offence of earnestness. The play is merely the medium for the man; this is not the highest form of art, but Brieux makes no extravagant claims. He has a message to deliver and he delivers it as interestingly as possible. For the rest, he desires no publicity about himself. He flees the hero-worshipper as he would the plague. Admiring and too insistent tourists drove him from his house at Agay, near Cannes, though he had posted a notice on his walls: "I come here for solitude and work." But your lion hunter is not to be deterred by such a trifle. And so his victim betook himself to the calm of the country near Orleans.

The charm and quality of the man are revealed in conversation. I know no intellectual joy superior to a *tête-à-tête* with him in the severe-looking study of his flat in Montmartre. It is a corner house overlooking a broad avenue and Place where omnibuses arrive and depart every few minutes. He stays here for a portion of the year—the least possible. He prefers to immerse himself in the country, where he may live his own life undisturbed by the distractions of Paris.

As a quite young man he stayed at Rouen and benefited by the calm of this provincial centre. It is possible that without this experience he would never have written *L'Engrenage* or *Blanchette*. This period was important in his life, for existence is simpler and more direct in the Provinces than in such a cosmopolitan centre as Paris. As editor of the local *Nouvelliste* he was brought into contact with public questions on a scale which rendered them easy to be understood, and thus he gained experience of affairs which later stood him in excellent stead. He laid the foundation of regular habits in that ancient city by the Seine, with its quiet provincial life, its wonderful cathedral, its beautiful churches, its Théâtre des Arts, where new works are often performed before they are heard in Paris. And his residence in Rouen enabled him to escape the literary cliques, and to see and realise life as a whole.

I have said that his origin was humble. His father was a working cabinet-maker in the Faubourg St. Denis, an industrial quarter of Paris. Here Brieux was born in 1858. He has given us a pleasant picture of those early years. Money was not very plentiful; education was difficult to obtain, and often the boy read beneath the gas-jet on the public stair to save the family oil.

The weekly round was varied by some simple

festivity on Sundays. A bottle of wine was brought from the neighbouring wine-shop and a pastry cake from the baker's. Notwithstanding the lack of riches, the family, consisting of father, son, and invalid grandmother, contrived to be happy. Each year a lottery bond of the city of Paris was purchased with the family savings, and anxiously the grandmother, having adjusted her spectacles, scanned the lists to see if the *gros lot* had not been gained. There were jokes at this little ceremony; but, secretly, one was impressed. Grandmama was the fairy godmother who would certainly bring luck one day. The luck came, but in the more glorious way of the literary success of young Brieux.

The painful efforts of those early days have left no bitterness of soul; Brieux is too big for that. His sufferings and his struggles have ennobled and strengthened his character, instead of debasing it. The intimate dramas which he witnessed in the lives of the poor have coloured his work and his outlook on the world and have made him greater. Providence seems to have willed that talent should flourish in the soil of suffering, moral or material.

Brieux read the best literature he could obtain. He revelled in *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*. Perhaps the attraction was the contrast afforded by the insouciance and high spirits of these

rollicking pages with his own struggles. But I suspect that he was never a Bohemian, but always solemn and serious. Another of his favourites was Goethe's *Faust*. Such reading made him long, in his turn, to write books which should move humanity. He attempted poetry, but soon discovered that it was not his *métier*—the fact is apparent from some published verse. All this time he was educating himself. Before he became a journalist at Dieppe and then at Rouen—as the readiest way of reaching literature—he had obtained employment as a clerk.

It was André Antoine, then Director of the Théâtre Libre, who discovered him just as he discovered that other dramatist of ideas—de Curel. But the method of discovery was different. In the one case, Antoine received three manuscripts on the same day under three different names ; he was struck with each and wrote to the addresses given. What was his astonishment when a correspondent, signing “de Curel,” stated that all three plays were his. Brieux, on the other hand, employed no pseudonym ; he sent the play under his own name ; it was immediately accepted, and Antoine produced it in his theatre.

Sprung from the people, Brieux has a natural and intimate knowledge of their ways of life and aspirations. He knows more about them than about the middle classes. When he draws

a society figure, it is an unconscious caricature. His unaccustomed feet trip in bourgeois drawing-rooms. He is much more at home with the working class. You feel that he understands their thoughts and heart-longings. He shows the working man at bottom to be a good fellow ; but this does not prevent him from recognising his failings. He chastiseth well because he loveth well.

Brieux has been called an anarchist. People say his plays have no practical meaning, they represent chaos. But Brieux is no anarchist ; though advanced, he is not subversive. Yet his real opinions are not necessarily represented by his apparent thesis. This is true of *La Femme Seule*, a subject upon which he spoke with great eloquence in a conversation with me a few days before the production of the play in London. He does not wish to preach the revolt of women, but to call attention to the unworthiness of men. If the latter were less egotistic and less a slave to the senses, there would be no woman's question. "Do you know," he asked in his impressive way, "that the amount spent on drink in Belgium each year is equal to the money paid in women's wages in that country ? Does it not show that if a man would keep out of the cabaret he could keep his wife at home ?" That is her proper place, Brieux thinks, and her necessary place if

the world is to continue. It is an old-fashioned doctrine for such a reformer, but Brieux declares that woman stands for to-morrow, whereas man is but the expression of to-day. Thus are marked their respective spheres: she to bear offspring and the hope of humanity, he to minister to the daily needs.

His observation goes to show that when women work in field or factory their children suffer. Since woman is the instructor of youth, she herself must be instructed and given opportunities for self-development. The only form of labour Brieux tolerates for women is that which she shares with her husband, as when the two can run a business together and are not separated from their children. Woman should not relinquish the helm at home, and society, he says, with great emphasis, should be as ashamed of profiting by her labour as by the labour of slaves. It is short-sighted of Feminists to wish to earn money by professions when they are sacrificing that which is beautiful and useful: influence over their children. This is poor economy, a poor exchange.

The vote is a small matter compared with these greater questions. He does not like violence in the suffrage propaganda, for it provokes violence in return. When a militant strikes a policeman, she is guilty of cowardice, for the sufferer cannot reply in kind. The business of civilisation is to

eliminate force and savagery. On the other hand, Brieux realises that the world can only progress by the action of fools—to quote Herbert Spencer. Thus there is some excuse for those who combat with authority or outrage property. Man's misconduct has kept woman down and rendered her position painful. There will be always women who, from want of physical beauty or for other reasons, cannot marry. For them is open the career of philanthropy, the care of other people's children. A woman doctor is perfectly logical, for her maternal instinct finds its opportunity in ministering to the weak and suffering. Brieux scarcely expects to find acceptance of his ideal ; but it is right, he thinks, to set it before humanity. In the meantime, man must get rid of that egotism which drives woman into the labour market to become a competitor at a lower rate of wage.

These opinions do not emerge naturally from the play, which seems to be frankly Feminist ; but Brieux says that no woman wishes voluntarily to be "unwomanly" ; she is only forced to it by necessity. It is singular that he should adopt so restricted a view of Feminism in France, where woman is engaged in all businesses, and in many cases is the more active partner.

Brieux is proverbially kind to the beginner ; yet his personal experience might well have soured him. He had an immense admiration for Augier,

and dedicated *Blanchette* to him. But the god refused to see him when he carried the MS. to his house. It was this lack of cordiality which induced Brieux to resolve that he would never imitate the great man if one day he passed to the other side of the street of letters, from the shade to the sunshine. And so he revenged himself by kindness. He even gives the tyro hints on writing. Some visitor says of him : "I can see him still, his broad shoulders and powerful torso, his curly hair, his face bronzed, and the eyes pure and profound, admirably clear, admirably blue. . . . Brieux gives the impression of some Paladin. In person he is exactly what one would expect him to be from his life of enthusiasm and action."

To seek an ideal whilst expressing life, to transport the human soul beyond itself, to free it from the things that hamper its flight to the stars, that is the object of the dramatist. It is Brieux's glory to have exposed blots on the social system, to have repaired injustices, his glory to have expressed the truth, to have inculcated in his contemporaries a nobler conception of life. He has rushed into the arena like a valorous soldier. If genius means creation, men like Brieux do better than create, for life itself streams from their pens. The dramatic author, he says, should be the intermediary between great thinkers and the public to whom their thoughts are inaccessible. They ought to offer

fine and generous ideas in an interesting form. "Our rôle is to offer to the contemplation of the public the dreams of philosophers and savants. The duty of the theatre is to deal with the great questions of the day. . . . Goethe said : 'Fill your heart and mind with the ideas and sentiment of your century, and the words will come.'"

Brieux worked at journalism long after he had achieved a reputation on the stage, for that reputation was not profitable in a monetary sense for some years. It was only after he had left the Théâtre Libre and gained an entrance to the Boulevard that he was able to make money. Eventually he could withdraw from the daily task and devote himself to his mission, which is to convert his countrymen to his own views of life. His mission has included the defence of the Frenchwoman against her traducers. In a work of great interest entitled *La Française* he has shown that the Frenchwoman is slandered, not merely abroad, but in French novels and plays. She is not the immoral, light-headed, frivolous person she is supposed to be. These defects apply only to a small class in the great centres of population. In the mass she is intelligent, virtuous, laborious, devoted to the care of the household, her children, and her husband, even though she does not consider it "dishonest" to take care of her personal appearance, to be as well dressed as her purse and own skilful fingers will

allow, to wear becoming hats, and even to attenuate with the aid of art the unkindly marks of time.

Brieux is a man of his epoch, and a fighter as well—one who realises with Seneca that to live is to be a soldier.











